

This week! Albert W. Aiken again! "Velvet Hand," in which appears "Injun Dick."

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No. 380

IN SUMMERTIME.

BY EREN E. REXFORD.

The rose is blossoming out on the spray,
A little red world that will last for a day.
The mother-bird broods on her mossy nest,
With a sweeter song in her speckled breast,
Than was ever caught in any words
Of the curious language of men or birds.
The bee is a-swing in the scented bells
Of honeysuckles and asphodels.
The robin is rocking, too lazy to sing,
Or put his head under his dappled wing;
Rocking and swinging, and now and then
He chirps to his mate, and is mute again.
I hear the tinkle of bells afar
On the sun-drenched slopes where the daisies are.
The low of cattle comes down the hills,
And blends with the ripple of laughing rills.
The air is sweet with the scent of grass,
That has fallen in swaths where the mowers pass.
There is silence here that is full of sound,
And I dream that the world is enchanted ground.
I hear in the music of brook and bird
A language that fits no spoken word,
But is written out by the hand of God
From his great warm heart in the sky and sod.
I dream while the sleepy robin swings,
Of a thousand happy and peaceful things,
For care is banished, and gone away
From sight and sound of this happy day.
My thoughts are so restful, from care so free,
That they seem like the song of a drowsy bee,
Sung to the chiming of lily-bells,
Swung by a wind-elf in wildwood dells.
Oh, days of summer, so full of rest!
Oh, dreams that are only dreams at best!
I would keep you always, if that might be,
But work, not dreaming, is waiting for me.

"Richard is Himself Again."

The Velvet Hand:

OR,

THE IRON GRIP OF INJUN DICK.

A Wild Story of the Cinnabar Mines.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "INJUN DICK," "OVERLAND KIT,"
"ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOB," "KENTUCK
THE SPORT," ETC., ETC.

PROLOGUE.

NOT DEAD BUT SLEEPING.

DARK and gloomy were the clouds that lowered around great Shasta's snow-covered peak. The hour of midnight was near at hand, and the slow-rising moon, struggling in the embrace of the thick and envious clouds, barely lighted up the night.

On the north-western side of the peak, where one of the edges of the old crater had broken away, thus forming a small circular plateau about a hundred yards in diameter, a huge fire was brightly burning.

By the fire, and feeding the flames, stood a tall, dark form.

The copper-colored face, the massive features, as well as the forest-prairie garb of deerskin which he wore plainly told that the man was native to the soil.

Far below in the valley twinkled the lights of the mining town of Cinnabar, and in the main street of that young metropolis of the Shasta valley, a group of miners were gathered, eagerly trying, with the aid of a powerful glass, to discover the meaning of the unusual beacon blazing so brightly on the side of giant Shasta's peak.

"Some of the buck's heathen ceremonies!" the word went around, as, by the aid of the glass, the miners made out that the tall form standing by the burning pile was a savage chief.

Little did the men of Cinnabar dream that the blazing beacon was to serve as a funeral pyre for the mortal remains of the long-bearded Cherokee, the Injun Dick of "Overland Kit," the untiring pursuer of "Rocky Mountain Bob," the Richard Talbot, superintendent of the Cinnabar Mine, of "Kentucky," and the dreaded White Rider, the Death-Shot of Shasta, who made such a fearful fight for the Cinnabar lode, as detailed in the pages of "Injun Dick."

"Give my body to the flames on Shasta's side," the hero had muttered, after receiving the chance shot, his death-wound, seemingly.

And O-wa-te (Mud-turtle), the Blackfoot chief, who had traveled far from the home of his tribe, seeking the friend of his early days in the golden California land, promised to respect the injunction.

Then the stricken man had swooned away, and the Indian, bending anxiously over the still form, believed that death's dark angel had set his fatal signet upon the brow of lion-hearted Talbot.

Motionless by the side of the body, with his head muffled in his blanket after the fashion of his people when mourning for the loved and lost, the chief had remained until the midnight hour was near at hand; then, to the top of Shasta's peak he bore the senseless form of the man who had been unto him like a brother.

The funeral pyre was kindled, and as the



The two road-agents nodded to their chief when he appeared, for the solitary horseman was Captain Death.

flames roared and sparkled high in the air, the Indian knelt by the side of the form, now so cold and still, a last farewell to take.

The eyes of the chief were heavy with tears as he looked upon the face of the man he had loved so well. Even the stoic nature of the savage gave way before the grief of that sad hour.

And then, bending over, he took the helpless form within his arms.

A second only the Indian pressed the senseless figure against his own broad breast, and then with a wild start and a half-shriek, almost womanly in its nature, he placed the body again upon the cold earth, and glared with eager eyes upon the passive face.

Life was not yet extinct!

In some little corner of the manly frame the vital spark still lingered.

The random shot had struck fairly home, but so strong the constitution of iron-limbed Injun Dick that the potent lead, which would have carried death to almost any other mortal, had only produced a deathlike swoon.

The heart was beating feebly, and the savage chief, well gifted in the rude medical practice of his race, doubted not that he could save the stricken man.

The fight for the Cinnabar mine was not yet ended! Injun Dick Talbot lived, and while he breathed no mortal man might hope to possess the Cinnabar lode in peace. Again it would be war to the knife!

The eyes opened; the great dark eyes, as keen as the orbs of a wildcat, and yet at times as soft in their light and as lustrous as the star-gazers of a beautiful girl.

Slowly the life came back to the manly form, and then, as the red chief raised the head of the reviving man upon his knee, the eyes of Talbot fell upon the distant lights of Cinnabar.

"Again I pass from the shadows of the valley of death, and wake to life; Cinnabar, thy glories are mine, and mortal man shall not wrest them from me. By fair means or foul again I'll own the Cinnabar lode, and woe to the men who dare to stand between me and my prize!"

And the pale stars, glittering above, registered the oath.

CHAPTER I.

THE VELVET HAND.

AGAIN we write of the young metropolis of the Shasta valley, thriving Cinnabar City. We take up the recital of the fortunes of this

celebrated town and its inhabitants just one year from the time when the beacon fire, blazing on the side of Shasta, had attracted the attention of the inhabitants.

And, during the year, Cinnabar had changed considerably. Many of the former inhabitants had departed, and fresh ones had taken their places.

The Cinnabar lode had been sold for taxes, and had been purchased for quite a small sum by a gentleman named Fernando del Colma, a native Californian, originally a cattle-raiser on the lower coast, near Los Angeles.

Del Colma was a man of thirty, apparently; a true Spanish-Mexican-American—a man of medium size, dark eyes, dark hair, pointed mustache and beard, complexion of tawny hue, little feet, little hands, almost effeminate in their character. A settled melancholy seemed to brood over on his handsome, haughty features. Great contrast was he, every inch a gentleman, to the rude and uncultivated men by whom he was surrounded.

He was a true descendant of the old race—the cattle-breeding, pleasure-loving, proud, haughty, but gentlemanly lords of California, who held the land in vast tracts before the gold discoveries brought in the pushing, adventuring Anglo-Saxons.

There was nothing in common between the old race and the new men, and little by little the rancheros gave way to the gold-miners.

Fernando's father had been one of the largest landed proprietors on the lower coast, and, dying, had bequeathed to his two children, Fernando and his sister Blanche, a large fortune.

Fernando, careless and unthrifty, like all his race, had made sad havoc with his money, until at last the day of reckoning came, and the young man found that few of his father's broad acres remained unincumbered.

Pleasure must cease and work begin.

During his trips to San Francisco he had made the acquaintance of a dashing young fellow, who called himself Bertrand Redan, and this gentleman, who professed to be well acquainted with the upper mining country, had offered to sell Fernando to try his luck in a mining speculation.

So, upon discovering that something must be done to retrieve his impaired fortunes, Del Colma had turned all his property into ready cash, and acting upon Redan's advice, had bought the Cinnabar mine; and, as he knew very little about mining matters, Redan accepted the position of superintendent, and agreed to manage the whole affair.

A handsome, dashing-looking fellow was

Redan, being rather tall in stature, well built, with black eyes and hair, which he wore long and curling, very white skin, and with a general air of refinement.

A pretty fair miner, too, as he quickly proved when he set the men to work to clear up the rubbish which had accumulated around the Cinnabar works, and proceeded to put the mine in working order.

An evil name the Cinnabar lode bore; too much blood and treasure had already been expended there, and the old residents of the town, who knew something of the mine in the old days, shook their heads sagely, and "reckoned" that no luck would come from meddling with the lode which had already cost one Indian war, to say nothing of the officials of the town who had fallen by the desperate hand of the Death Shot of Shasta.

Some of these sayings had come to the ears of Del Colma, but he shrugged his shoulders with true Spanish indifference, and proceeded to erect a cottage just outside the Cinnabar property, a small, snug dwelling, and in looks superior to any other in town.

Cinnabar City was not particularly well supplied with women, and what there was, as a general rule, were rather weather-beaten and ugly. It was a matter, then, of little wonder that the arrival of Blanche del Colma excited a great deal of interest, for Blanche was a beauty. No fairer girl had ever stepped foot within the Shasta valley. She was strikingly like her brother; the same eyes, the same hair, and the same peculiar melancholy expression.

She was as sweet by nature as one of the juicy oranges of her own sunny clime, but as proud as though she had been born to a queen's estate.

Blanche del Colma had lived a month in Cinnabar, and yet no gentleman of the town could boast that he was a friend of the charming girl; very few indeed could lay claim to even a simple acquaintance.

Still she was no recluse; hardly a pleasant day but saw her in the saddle. She rode a spotted mustang, a creature of infinite beauty, as though she was born to the back of a steed.

But there was nothing in common between the fair Spanish-blooded girl and the gay young fellows of the town. She was not for them, nor they for her. In her sight they were rude, rough men, and she would have as soon thought of entertaining an affection for one of the half-blood herdsmen upon her father's estate as to allow her maiden fancy to be pleased with one of these sturdy men of Cinnabar.

Romantic by nature, she looked for a gallant lover, some stranger from beyond the seas, one of the old race, perchance, from whence her line had sprung.

Del Colma, like most native Californians, was a slave to some of the peculiar traits of his race. He was a hard drinker, deeply addicted to play, lacked the thrift and caution of the Anglo-Saxon, and was as careless with his money as though he still possessed the broad acres that his father once had owned near to the "city of the Angels," on the southern coast, and, naturally, his love for gambling, and for strong liquor, brought him often in contact with the young fellows of the town.

Therefore, when in company with the gay bucks of Cinnabar, he had encountered Blanche, common courtesy had compelled him to introduce his companions.

Small benefit, though, the introduction had been to the enamored youths. A cold bow and a scant "good-morning" were all that the Californian beauty vouchsafed in return for their elaborate salutations.

There was a small group of friends, generally found together after the toils of the day were done, and commonly termed by the miners the "Occidental gang," with whom Del Colma was quite intimate, and as the members of the "gang" were the leading men of the town, it was only natural that one and all, with one exception, should be ardent admirers of the fair senorita.

Clint MacAlpine, formerly postmaster, but now mayor of the city; John Rocks, usually termed "Sandy" Rocks, largely interested in the Queen City Mining Company of Angels Bar, a thriving suburb of Cinnabar; "Judge" Bob Candy, the express-agent; Billy King, formerly the barkeeper, but now the thriving proprietor of the Occidental Hotel; Leo Pollock, the largest storekeeper in the town, were the principal members of the Occidental "gang," and with the Occidentals, too, was usually to be found one of the most noted characters of the city at the time of which we write. He was a man of thirty or thereabouts, a little above the medium size, with a strong, manly face, a well-knit figure, and a bearing which stamped him as a captain among captains. His face was always smoothly shaven, and he was as neat and careful in his dress as though he were a promenadeur fresh from the asphalt pavements of la belle Paris, rather than a denizen of one of the roughest little mining towns to be found in all California.

He dressed so oddly that, once seen, he was not apt to be forgotten. A complete suit of black velvet he wore; coat, vest, and pantaloons, the hat even, were of the same material, and his ruffled shirt-bosom, wherein gleamed two tiny diamond studs, was a miracle of art. The best card-player in all Northern California this gentleman was reputed to be, and, clear from Yreka to Mount Shasta, he was known as "The Velvet Hand of Cinnabar."

Richard Velvet he called himself, and he had such a soft, "taking" way with him, as many a foolhardy miner, confident in his skill in card-playing, had found to his cost, and he was always so cool, so self-possessed, that it was not long before "Richard Velvet," that was not long before, "Richard Velvet," that was new sharp," became shortened to "Velvet Hand," and the gentleman in question rather liked the title, so that he got into the habit of giving his name as Velvet Hand. These little nicknames stick on the Pacific slope.

Many a skillful player of cards was there in the territory tributary to the lively city of Cinnabar, but not one of the tribe could win with the ease and grace of Velvet Hand.

A strange fact, too, about this quiet gentleman, and one which his companions had often noted and commented upon: he alone of all the young men of the town seemed not to have fallen a victim to the charms of Blanche del Colma; he alone of all the Occidental gang had not secured an introduction to the dark-eyed beauty, and yet he was on more intimate terms with Fernando del Colma, her brother, than any other man in the town—Bertrand Redan, the superintendent of the Cinnabar works, alone excepted.

Many a time the gray light of the morn had peeped in at the window of a little private room on the second floor of the Occidental Hotel to find the Californian and the Velvet Hand hard at play, with a week's production of the Cinnabar lode trembling in the balance; and seldom it was that Del Colma rose a winner from the table.

And when Mr. Dick Velvet was rallied about his avoidance of the glowing beauty, so rich in all her wondrous charms, and asked why, being so intimate with the brother, he had not tried to push his fortune with the sister—for the cool sport was as good-looking a gentleman as there was in the town—he would laughingly reply that women were "bad medicine" to him, and that as long as he depended upon card-playing to keep ahead of the world he would give the softer sex a wide berth.

Thus matters stood in the year 1877, when we again take up the pen to chronicle the doings of the men of Cinnabar.

CHAPTER II.

THE HAND OF CAPTAIN DEATH.

THREE miles from Cinnabar City the Shasta river cut its way through the McCloud canyon. Dark and deep was the defile—as lonely a spot as could be found within a dozen miles of the mining settlement.

At the upper end of the canyon this defile widened out into a small rocky valley, through which ran the old Indian trail leading from Chinabur up the river.

Along the trail, in the dusk of the evening, a horseman was riding. He was well mounted, well armed, and seemed familiar with the road, for he pushed straight onward without hesitation.

When he reached the open valley above the McCloud canyon, he halted for a moment, cast a careful glance around him as if suspicious of observation, then, spurred his horse over the steep rocks until he reached the side of the rocky wall. There he dismounted. Drawing a black mask from his pocket, he covered his face with it. This done, he pushed his way through a dense clump of bushes, leading his horse by the bridle, and disappeared, apparently having made his way right into the solid rock; but if the clump of bushes had been removed, the mouth of a cave—a narrow cleft, just wide enough to allow the entrance of a horse—would have been visible.

Within the narrow passage all was dark as Egypt, but the masked man proceeded without hesitation, apparently familiar with the road, until a winding in the passage suddenly brought him into a vaulted chamber in the rock; thirty feet at least in diameter it was.

Within the apartment, the roof of which extended cone-shaped up into the rock, evidently having an outlet above, were two other horses—two other men.

The horses were quietly munching their oats in some rude stalls constructed at the further end of the apartment.

The men, roughly dressed, miner fashion, and also hiding their faces behind black masks, were seated upon some buffalo-robes, seemingly waiting for the arrival of the newcomer.

A couple of lanterns suspended from spikes driven into the walls afforded light.

The moment the horseman released his grasp on the bridle, the animal hastened to join the other two, thus plainly proving that he was no stranger to the cavern and its mysteries.

And this secret chamber in the heart of the hill was the mountain home of the daring and bloody road-agent known far and wide in the Shasta valley as Captain Death.

And who was Captain Death?

Ah! that was a question that often had been put but as yet had not been answered.

About a year before the time of which we write Captain Death had first made his appearance in the Shasta valley.

A stage-coach, northward bound for Yreka, had been halted in a gloomy defile, seven or eight miles from the city of Chinabur, and robbed of its express matter.

A single man had done the job. The driver, perceiving that the road-agent was alone, had attempted—contrary to the general habit of his class—to offer resistance, but had been promptly tumbled off his box by a well-directed shot fired by the outlaw.

The frightened passengers, four in number, had fled from the hack in hot haste at the driver's downfall, never offering a sign of resistance; then the "gentleman of the road" had coolly proceeded to appropriate the valuables.

This finished he had addressed a few words to the disabled driver, who lay groaning on the ground, cursing the evil star which led him to offer resistance to the bird of prey.

"My name is Captain Death," he said, in a coarse, evidently disguised voice. "I'm going to run this hyer trail for a time and I want the folks hereabouts to understand that I mean business, every time! If they knuckle down and let me go through 'em, all right! If they don't, then look out for sudden death."

With this the bird of prey coolly rode off.

Of course Wells and Fargo, the owners of the stage line, were not going to stand any of this nonsense; therefore, they went for Captain Death lively, but little good it did them, too; not a single trace of the desperado could they discover!

After a time the search was given up, as the road-agent was supposed to have been driven off by the urgent chase; but, just as everybody had come to the conclusion that they wouldn't hear any more of the bold rider, another coach going north was attacked, and this time Captain Death had two companions.

A desperate resistance was offered by one of the passengers, an old man, who carried a small fortune on his person, and who was accompanied by his daughter. All fled from the hack but he, fierce at the prospect of losing his gold.

Captain Death called upon him to surrender; he refused, when, without more ado, the road-agents opened fire upon the coach, mortally wounding at the first discharge both the old man and his daughter, but, although staining their souls with this terrible crime, the outlaws did not secure the prize they were in search of, for the up coach from Yreka happening to approach just at that moment, compelled the rascals to retreat in hot haste.

This bloody deed created a terrible excitement; and for a time the road-agents disappeared, but when the excitement cooled down again they haunted the road.

The name of Captain Death became as well known along the trail as the express line itself, but so cunningly did he manage that never by any chance did one of the many expeditions in pursuit of him ever get fairly upon his trail.

That Captain Death was well posted as to the designs of his pursuers was evident; he had "friends at court" and they gave him timely warning when danger threatened him.

The two road-agents nodded to their chief when he appeared, for the solitary horseman was the notorious Captain Death, in person. He took a seat on one of the buffalo-robes, lighted a cigarette, commenced smoking as he looked, inquiringly, upon his followers.

"Any news?" he asked.

"Not any," responded the road-agent on the right, a tall, broad-shouldered fellow who was known as No. 1.

Captain Death had organized his band in a peculiar manner. The faith of man he distrusted, and therefore neither one of his companions knew who he was, or had ever seen him without his mask. He had picked his two men, had approached them at night, disguised, and enrolled them, neither one knowing the other.

"For our own safety," as he had explained, "it is best we should be as strangers to each other. Then if one is taken he cannot denounce his companions."

And so, with covered faces, the outlaws always met. Names were never mentioned. The leader was addressed as captain, the first road-agent, the burly fellow, as No. 1, the second, a thin, tall individual, as No. 2.

"Nothing stirring, eh?"

"Nothin' that I hear of," replied No. 2, with a strong nasal accent.

"It is some time since we made a raise."

"Yes," responded No. 1, with a melancholy shake of the head. "Dry as dust an' nothin' to keep the jints limber."

"Bout time we struck a rifle, somewhar I calculate!" No. 2 suggested.

"I've got a big job on hand, boys," Captain Death said; "no road-agent business this time, but something that will pay us better. You know the Chinabur mine?"

Both of the men nodded.

"That's our mutton!"

The two men shook their heads; they did not understand.

"The mine is a rich one," No. 1 observed.

"Tain't payin' much yet," No. 1, observed.

"That is because it has not yet got fairly to work, but it will pay, though. A friend of mine wants it, but as it would take twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars to buy it he proposes that we shall get it for him, which we can at a less figure. Fernando del Colma is at the end of his rope; all the money he has is in the mine; there's a mortgage of ten thousand dollars due on it next week. He hopes to push that mortgage off for a month and in the mean time get out ere enough to meet it. Now we must raise blazes generally; damage the machinery, get the hands on a strike, stop work by any means so that the place will have to be sold by the sheriff, then my friend will pay two or three thousand dollars for the services we render in the matter."

"Hol' on!" cried No. 1, suddenly. "Is your friend named Injun Dick Talbot?"

"Injun Dick Talbot," said Captain Death, slowly; "what do you mean?"

"Why, that if it isn't Injun Dick he mought as well hang up his fiddle!" No. 1 replied.

"Tell you what it is, Cap, I know a heap 'bout this hyer town! That air Chinabur mine belongs to Injun Dick, the Death Shot of the Shasta as he's been called! It's an onlucky consarn; I've bin expectin' to see Dick pop in and bu'st it up as he allers has done afore."

"I never heard of him," Captain Death said, dryly, "and I reckon that he won't trouble my scheme any."

"That Velvet Hand is tryin' to bu'st the Chinabur consarn as fast as he kin," No. 2 remarked, abruptly. "I heered last night that he winned a thousand dollars from Del Colma in a single settin'."

"I shouldn't be surprised; but now to business; remember! Do all that is in your power to stop the mine from working. If we can fetch Del Colma into the hands of the sheriff it will be a couple of thousand dollars in our pockets. We must let the stages alone for awhile, for the pursuit is still hot, and in the mean time can amuse ourselves with this little game. The third night hence we will meet here again."

"Say, Cap," cried No. 1, abruptly, "wouldn't it be a good idea to go for this Velvet Hand? I reckon that he would pan out right lively if we got him up hyer onct."

"That is worth thinking of," Captain Death replied, rising; "and now, boys, be careful how you approach the cave, for if our hiding-place was once discovered it would be all up with us."

And then the three separated, each one to make his way back to Chinabur, by different roads.

The plot against Del Colma was working.

CHAPTER III.

THE GAMESTERS.

The first gray streaks of the coming moon, lining the eastern skies and heralding the approach of the sun-god, peeped in at the window of a small, plainly-furnished room, situated in the second story of the Occidental Hotel.

Within the room, a table between them, were seated two men, busily engaged at cards. The floor was strewn with crumpled cards; 'tis the losing gamester's whim to try a fresh pack every now and then in order to woo the fickle dame, Fortune.

That the two men had been at their game all night long was evident, for the candles were burning low, and the bed in one corner of the apartment had not been used.

The two men were quite a contrast to each other; the first, a good specimen of the Anglo-Saxon race, the second bearing the impress of the old Spanish line in every feature.

A single glance at the first—the winner evidently, for he was cool and unruffled, and as clear of eye as if he had not spent the livelong night at the card-table—and from his peculiar garb he is easily recognized as the Velvet Hand of Chinabur.

And the second, too, so strongly marked in feature, quite fit to sit for the portrait of Hernando Cortez, the conqueror of Mexico, was the man arrayed in the olden garb, no trouble to recognize in him the Californian, Fernando del Colma, the owner of the Chinabur mine.

The players are ciphering up the results of the game.

"Five hundred dollars I owe you," Colma said, with a gloomy brow. "The fiend take the cards! Will my luck never change?"

"I'm afraid not, senor," the winner replied; "not until you change your style of playing."

The observation irritated the Californian.

"Am I not as good a player then as you?" he exclaimed, loftily, a true Spaniard in his arrogant way.

"No, not as good," Velvet Hand replied, coolly.

"And why not? It is the cards that favor you, when my hand is good, you hold a better!"

"Oh, no, only I know the value of hands better than you do, and I keep my temper. I play for amusement, you for money."

The Californian rose to his feet indignantly.

"You forget yourself, senor!" he exclaimed, mortally offended, reaching for his cloak and beginning to drop it around him in the picturesque Mexican fashion. "I am a gentleman of birth and fortune! Gold! I was born to it, and to me it is so much dust, while you—?" he hesitated.

The Velvet Hand, busy now in trimming his nails with a little pearl-handled knife, laughed outright.

"Let me finish the sentence for you, senor," he said. "I am a gambler, a man who lives by card-playing. No social match for you, senor. You are an honest gentleman, the proprietor of the richest mine in the town, and yet you curse your evil fortune when luck goes against you and you lose a few hundred dollars. I, on the contrary, am a social pariah with not a friend on earth, and yet I lose my money with a smile and laugh at the decrees of fortune."

"Forgive me, senor!" Del Colma exclaimed, hastily, his generous nature touched by the frank coolness of the other. "I did not mean to wound you. I do lose my temper and play badly; I confess it! I am not a man of ice; it is not the money I care for, but the losing—that is what galls me! You have won from me five thousand dollars since we commenced playing two weeks ago and I can ill spare the money."

"Why play then?" was the natural question.

"I cannot help it!" cried the Californian, desperately. "There is a fiend within me that craves the excitement."

"It's lucky for you that you have got the

Cinnabar mine to back you," the other said, carelessly. "By the by, you're doing very well, ain't you?"

"No, not yet."

"It's a rich mine."

"Yes; but we have hardly got the machinery in working order."

"By the way, senor, you and I have got to be pretty intimate, considering that you are the owner of one of the richest properties in the town, and that I am only a poor devil of a card-sharp, and so I'm going to make bold to give you a point or two, for I've had a good deal of experience in mining; that is, if you are willing to receive the advice in the same spirit in which it is given."

"I shall be honored, senor," Del Colma replied, with a stately bow.

"I took a look at the works this afternoon. I knew the mine in the old time, and I had a sort of curiosity to see how the place appeared."

The wisest head could not have guessed from the cool way in which the man spoke, of the terrible flood of bitter recollections which the Cinnabar mine recalled to his mind. "The machinery you are using is not exactly the right sort, and you've got the toughest set of hands there that I think I ever saw, and your superintendent—Bertrand Redan, do you call him?" The Californian nodded. "Have you perfect faith in him?"

"As in my brother!" Del Colma replied, with true Spanish warmth.

"Ah, that's lucky; he has full charge of everything, I presume?"

"Yes, of everything."

"A man that you can trust is invaluable," the cool sharp observed, carelessly.

The Californian, open and generous-hearted by nature, took Velvet Hand's doubtful words as a compliment to his superintendent.

"Yes, he is invaluable, and yet my sister does not trust him," he remarked, slowly.

"No?" the American was surprised; "women have been instinctive sometimes."

"She does not like him. I am astonished, for he is a fine, noble fellow, and I fear he cared more for my naughty sister than he should; he was not wont to speak so openly of the lovely Blanche, dearer to him than the apple of his eye. 'The amount I owe you I have not with me—'"

"Your word is quite sufficient," Velvet Hand replied, carelessly.

The Californian hesitated; it was evident that he disliked to remain a debtor.

"Stay!" he exclaimed, abruptly, drawing a diamond ring from his little finger and placing it upon the table; "take this as security for the sum."

The other shook his head.

"I would rather not."

"Nay, I insist! Life is uncertain; I may die before I pay the debt."

"Don't let that trouble you; I should consider the account settled."

"Pray oblige me!"

The senor was thoroughly in earnest, and as the easiest way to settle the matter, Velvet Hand placed the ring upon his little finger.

"The sun is rising," the Californian remarked, approaching the window, and as he did so he caught sight of his sister riding past, mounted upon her spotted mustang.

Hardly had the sound of her horse's hoofs died away in the distance when a fearful uproar arose on the air, and from the door of a low saloon, opposite the hotel, came forth a motley gang, bearing a Chinaman in their midst.

Harder characters than were in the crowd could not be found within the territory of Chinabur.

There was Yuba Bill, one of the recognized bullies of the town; Joe Bowers, the fat and greasy bummer; Doc Slater, the smartest horse-thief north of Frisco; Col. Tom Pipkin, as arrant a knave as ever dwelt within a white jail, and half a dozen other scamps equally as bad.

The crowd swung a rope over the limb of a convenient tree, adjusted a noose around the neck of the trembling, crying almond-eyed son of the East, from whose flowing sleeves sundry "face" cards were dropping, and prepared to swing him up.

"By Jove!" cried the card-sharp, throwing up the window-sash; "it's Hop-Ling-Ki, and he's the only man in town that can do up my ruffled shirts! They mustn't hang him, or I'm dished!"

Out of the window then, nimble as a monkey, went Velvet Hand, while the Californian rushed down the stairway.

(To be continued.)

Ruby and Gold.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

The place was as wild as if dropped intact from pre-Adamic chaos. The scrubby evergreen oak caught its clinging roots in pockets of soil in imperceptible fissures and hollows on the seemingly bald surface of those gigantic rocks, and the tiny thread of a waterfall shivered in mid-air and dissolved in a white veil of mist as it fell in a sheer descent of a hundred feet and gathered again in an ice-cold, limpid pool, on the edge of which those few adventurous spirits, led by Walt Marquis, had made their camp.

Marquis himself was standing a solitary figure on a great projecting bowlder midway up the light. Rock and man might have been cut from bronze, so motionless was the figure with folded arms and eyes bent upon the rainbow which spanned the fall.

For the time the mission which had brought him here, the passions which sway men and the objects which make the sum of human existence, were blotted out in his contemplation of that varied scene.

But his followers were not losing their time in poetic abstraction. They had separated and scattered among the rocks and black, gaping fissures. The sun had gone down when they all met again about their rude repast of crackers, dried buffalo-meat and steaming black coffee. Walt was back from dreamland by this time, with a keen appetite developed by the mountain air, fully alive to his own interests again, and eager to learn the result of the others' explorations.

"I don't like the look of things," said Worth. "It isn't what I was led to expect. The place couldn't be more upset if an earthquake had been at work here. The slope that's put down on the map for the left side of the stream is on the right; the big chestnut that stood on the bank is now uppermost half a mile away, and there's no mention of the fall. There's been the mischief to pay here at some time, bet your life on it, Walt, and for all I kin see there ain't even a 'salt' to pay you for your trouble."

"For, all that, the geological formation promises gold, and the work done here was just enough to make the promise a certainty."

"Geological fiddlesticks!" cut in Worth, contemptuously. "I'd give more for a show of

the color than any of them calculations. If it paid, what did old Vanstallar want to give you the chance for? I've got it in my head that you've been sent here on a fool's errand, if not for something worse. Wait, and I suspicion, if all's told, there's something besides gold at the bottom of your pig-headedness, running counter to every bit of advice that's given you."

They had finished the meal by this time, and stretched themselves on the grass. Worth with his hands clasped over his knees and black pipe alight, Walt watching the twinkle of peeping stars in the silver-gray distance while he listened to his companion's half-grumbling tone.

"So there is," he answered the last remark. "Something more precious than gold by far. The price of my success will be—Ruby. Now, Worth, you are my chief dependence. I rely on you not to discourage the other men. Besides, my good fortune will be yours and theirs as well."

Worth was far from satisfied.

"I thought there was something behind this move, and now I'm sure of it. As well talk to them stones yonder as try to turn you, alt, but you'll see yet that I am right. Old Vanstallar never promised you little black-eyes and sent you here for nothing. One thing bothers me—how that stream goes clean over the wall when its natural course would have been to work around the cut."

"That was its original bed. The miners turned it on its course and so dug over the bottom and undermined the banks that it is little wonder you did not recognize the old watercourse with its position on the map. Just wait till morning, my boy, and see what a glorious opening they and the cascade together have left free for us. There's a natural tunnel worked through the ridge above, a dry and roomy passage now, and using that for a short cut, we will horsecomb the hill from their deserted mine but that we find the continuance of the leads those other fellows missed."

It was one month later. There was a sulphurous heat in the air, a dead lull under a burning sky, that made every breath drawn an oppressive gasp. A knot of discontented men, with Worth for their speaker, were facing Walt.

"We've give it a fair trial, and all the gold we've found kin be worked up in a goose-quill. Provisions have run low, there's a big storm a-brewin', and the boys won't stay with the prospect of impassable roads and starvation staring them in the eyes."

"No man is obliged to stay against his will, not even you, Worth; but I know you won't desert me."

Worth's face set doggedly.

"I won't stay to encourage you in a fool's quest. The sooner you throw this up for a bad job the easier you'll git off. We've made up our minds; we take the back track this very day, with you or without you, just as you like."

And it was without him, notwithstanding Worth's after entreaties and arguments.

"I've heard of crazy men diggin' their own graves," declared the latter at last, in angry disgust, "and I declare, I believe it's what you're bent on. It's my opinion that old Van only sent you here to git you out of the way while he marries Black-eyes to the fellow he's chose for her. If he hain't, I've more than a mind to cut in and take her from you myself just to teach you a lesson."

Walt laughed.

"I can trust Ruby against all of you," he said, but certain apprehensions he had felt before were aroused by the other's speech, and haunted him in his succeeding solitude. Why had Vanstallar, his bitter enemy always, given him this chance?

"I know the value of both money and brains," the wealthy old ranchman had said on that occasion, "and I'm not going to give my girl to any man that hasn't plenty of both. If you can get the first out of the deserted mine by any exercise of the last, you're welcome to your chance."

Evidently, Vanstallar had little faith in the mine, but after a careful study of the locality, Walt's enthusiasm rose. Still, he had had his misgivings, and had been on the watch for any sign of possible treachery since, but none had come.

He worked as he had never worked before after his companions left him. Two days passed, and then the storm which had been gathering broke. One by one dense clouds flocked up from the horizon; a breath of air rustled the foliage, then a sudden gust swept the face of the mountain, lashing the stoutest trees like switches, tearing out shrubs by the root, driving the dust in choking clouds, and dislodging insecure fragments of rock that thundered down into unseen abysses whose haunting reverberations were taken up and passed, fainter and fainter into the farther distances. The forked lightnings poured forth in a blinding flash, and the rain swept down in sheets that penetrated the miserable miner's cabin, threatening to demolish it with every boisterous gust. But the fury of the storm was of short duration. When it had settled into a steady, monotonous downpour, Walt was back at his work in the furthest passage of the mine, the light in his cap making weird shadows dance upon the walls, and the sound of his pick mingling with a kind of muffled roar that at first he attributed to the elements raging without. Before he had struck a dozen blows he found a sloppy pool gathered at his feet. He moved from his place mechanically and glanced around. The water was at his ankles now, creeping stealthily and silently upward, and after one dazed moment of uncomprehending wonder, the meaning of the calamity which had befallen him flashed upon Walt.

The thread-like stream, turbulent and swollen now, had burst its artificial bonds, and was finding its way back to its natural channel. With a wild cry rising to his lips he turned and fled. It was a race for life, and the treacherous waters had the best of it. He was swept from his feet as he reached the turning of that first passage, his light went out, he lost his breath and his senses almost until the current dashed him against a projecting point, and he clung to the ragged rocks with his mangled, bleeding hands, finding a foothold from which the raging torrent was powerless to tear him. And still the water rose higher and higher. It was about his shoulders, it crept like a slimy coil to his neck, then it was at his lips, and he turned his face upward with the instinct of a despairing soul that would commend itself to Heaven.

Through the blackness of Tartarus that filled the place came a single ray of light like the glimmer of a distant star. There was no way to reach it, no way to leave his present position without falling prey to the mad current that filled the tunnel beyond, foaming to its roof, but something like hope thrilled him with the discovery.

A minute or two went by like as many ages, and still he stood, living, breathing, hoping

more as the truth stole slowly over him. The water had ceased to rise.

Assured of that, the next thing was to form some plan of escape. He felt of the wall about him, and managed to draw his boots where he stood. Then, using his clasp-knife, driven firmly in to the hilt, for a support where no other presented itself, he began to climb slowly toward the gleam of light. It was leaving a desperate situation for one more desperate. He was chilled to the bone, and the weight of his water-soaked clothing dragged him back, his hands and feet were so torn that they marked every painful inch of the way with their blood. But cool nerve and brave effort won him success this far. He reached the aperture through which the light streamed in, and thrusting his arm in the fissure he struck in his knife again as he felt his foothold giving way. The blade broke off short, and the handle went ringing down from his benumbed hand. Next instant his feet slipped, and he hung by his arms only above the chasm.

Oh, fool! Below he would have stood a chance when the water subsided; here it was but a question of moments until he must lose his hold and fall to sure destruction. He groaned in his despair, and shut his eyes upon the light which was only a mockery, piercing its way as it did through one tiny crevice between tons of clay and gravel that barred his way to the outer world.

Oh, Heavenly Love! Was that a shout, or only a fancy of his reeling brain? It came again. He gathered strength to give one answering cry. Then the crevice was darkened, something rattled within it, lodged, then came again, and a coil of rope reached his faltering grasp. How he fastened it about him, and waited through the two long hours during which pick and spade were plying with a will above him, was like a dream of agony to him for the remainder of his life.

Eager hands reached in and drew him forth at last, such a pallid, blood-stained spectacle, that somebody there broke out with a despairing cry:

"Oh, he is dead! Oh, Walt! my Walt!"

But he had life enough left to open his eyes and stare at her in weak amazement, gasping:

"Ruby!"

Ruby it was, with a story to tell of the plot she had discovered. How the importunities of Walt's jealous rival had drawn the revelation from her father that he had sent the young fellow to his doom. The mine could only be worked with greatest peril; sooner or later the force of the resisting stream would break through its barriers, and every workman there would be drowned like a rat in its hole. How, overhearing this delectable confession and having no one she could trust or send, she had come herself to warn him.

Worth took up the tale there. His heart had misgiven him, and he had turned back from his fellows, intending to rejoin his friend. He had encountered Ruby, and together they had reached the spot in time.

"And after this," said the girl, who felt her hands, clasped in his, drawn nearer and nearer to his beating heart, "I am yours if you'll take the gift, Walt. I'm of age and free to act, and that has released me from every filial duty I owe."

Worth, with a handful of the clay he had shovelled out, squeezed between his palm, and supposed to be hearing something of this lover's adieu, broke out, jubilantly:

"Ruby and gold, Walt. Hurrah, Ruby and gold! We've struck it, the richest lode I ever set my eyes on. How'll old Van feel when we tell him the upshot of his plot

hands could be no redder than they were now. But she anticipated no such extremity of action; she gave herself up to the exuberant delight of the hour, and gave unlicensed freedom to her thoughts as she sat there looking out upon the fair estates that would soon be her own.

She was determined to have her engagement a short one; and, in consideration of the fact that it was now unnecessary for her to go away from Westwood, she desired its publicity as much as possible. She longed for the time when she might know she stood in her own home, the honored wife of its lord; knowing, perfectly well, that no cruel or harsh or suspicious word would ever dare be breathed against Florian Ithamar's wife; knowing that his wealth and position and influence were magic safeguards against even her terrible past.

"It is July now—in September the marriage must take place. We must have a magnificent display; there must be a breakfast, and a band of concealed music, and in the evening a ball and reception. I will send my order at once for the most magnificent trousseau that World can design; Florian will have the family jewels reset; I shall be gay and joyous, and my husband shall have no reason to regret having installed me in Jocelyne's place."

There came a knock at the parlor over her face as she mentally pronounced the name of the victim to her jealous hate.

"I wonder why I have thought so much more than usual of her to-day, and to-night? I presume it is because I have accomplished that for which I removed her. I wonder what she would think if she knew—I wonder if she does know?"

A little shiver of nervousness took momentary possession of her. The foolishly welcome thought that she had suddenly intruded that Rose gave a little involuntary look toward the open door of the small bedroom where her maid slept—Pauline it was, who had entered her service when Jocelyne no longer needed her, and who had been Rose's almost constant companion since; for, despite her recklessness, her awful courage, her indomitable will in the performance of the duties she had chosen, Rose would not remain alone at night; for it was at night that her outrageous and constant companion's unrest and memories of haunting regret.

And to-night, when the clocks had tolled two, and there was the solemn stillness of a summer night brooding over the moonlighted landscape, Rose was conscious of unusual sensations of sensation that was a mixture of superstitious unrest and memories of haunting regret.

"I am worse than a child, sillier than a bear-skin-frightened baby! I will not permit my imaginative thoughts to intrude into my happiness, like a death-shed at a feast. What is Jocelyne Merle, lying mouldered in her coffin over yonder, to me?"

She arose from her chair as she spoke, with her eyes looking almost defiantly in the direction of the little chapel, whither her hands had consigned her victim; a glance of almost smiling contempt was in them, and a sneer at her own transient, inexplicable sensations of alarm was on her beautiful lips.

A glance that turned suddenly to a look of frozen horror.

A sneer that was petrified on her lips that blanched to ashen paleness.

For, on the wide, moonlighted lawn, its velvety turf unbroken even by a shrub, she distinctly, plainly saw Jocelyne Merle coming toward the house; her white burial dress trailing noisily over the thick, soft grass, her dusky hair floating over her shoulders, her lovely face irradiated with a weird, unearthly expression of marble calm.

Jocelyne, as Rose had seen her as the fair girl lay in her satin-lined, satin-pillowed casket! Jocelyne, gliding silently, swiftly toward the house!

The cry that was on Rose's lips seemed to be petrified before she uttered it. Her blood ran through her veins in a chilling tide; an icy stagnation seemed to seize her powers of volition and motion as she stood there, half-crazed with the awful sight of a living, graceful figure come gliding over the lawn toward the house, toward her!

Nearer it came, nearer still. Rose's breath came in gasps of agony; great beads of perspiration stood clamorously on her forehead, as the figure disappeared in the vicinity of the lower windows, she gave a low cry of crazed pain, and dashed into Pauline's bedroom, shaking the girl vigorously.

"Pauline! Wake up, for God's sake! I have seen a ghost—I have seen Jocelyne! Light gas—look the doors!—speak to me and tell me I am not mad!"

And the proud, wicked woman clung to her servant with a very despair of slavish fear.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE RESURRECTION FROM SLEEP.

Not Jocelyne's ghost, returned from the shadow-world, to visit her and the punishment of terror on the treacherous friend who was to usurp her place.

Not Jocelyne in the spirit, but, Jocelyne alive, and in the flesh, her glorious beauty unimpaired by the strange death she had undergone, and with her—where else?—in safety and comfort! Sunset Hill! The empty house to which I can carry her, and no one will be the wiser! I'll do it, I can do it, I will! A second surreptitious visit, to put another body in the empty coffin that shall be dressed in Miss Merle's grave-clothes, and my tracks will be covered. I will attempt it!"

These thoughts had passed through St. Felix's mind with the rapidity of lightning. Probably not a second had elapsed before he had taken the mental view of the case, and made the mental decision; and even while he was deciding had cautiously broken a pane of the stained glass, and crept through into the semi-darkness of the audience-room, where a lamp was burning dimly, as he suddenly remembered having heard it always burned.

It was only the work of a minute to gain access to the inner room, a vault, and by the light of the lamp he had taken from its place he saw the new, handsome casket standing on the trestles, that held the living girl in his horrid embrace.

Then a horrible fear suddenly seized him—how could he unscrew the large silver-headed nails? His pocket-knife was useless, his fingers equally so; great Heaven, how was he to accomplish his task after all?

A faint rustling noise inside the casket increased his horror; if he could he would have torn the lid off bodily, regardless of consequences, so frantic was he in his genuine human desire to rescue this girl.

For the moment all thought of the ultimate end of this task was lost; he was only a fellow-being, conscious of the awful peril of another. His face gathered great beads of sweat as he threw off his overcoat, and fairly trembled in his vain endeavors to make his fragile knife turn even one relentless screw. Then, in a mockery of hope, it seemed, he began a search for some chance, a scrap of iron—anything, he thought, and almost a laugh came from his lips as he snatched at an old rusty knife-blade, that he found fitted sufficiently well to enable him to hope for success—an old broken knife-blade, Mike, the gardener's boy, had lost years ago, and that had been waiting for its part in this tragedy.

It did not take him many minutes to remove the lid; and he found his most suspicious crept; Jocelyne was alive—alive in her coffin, and as he gave a low exclamation of almost incredulous surprise and satisfaction, her dark eyes wearily opened and met his own earnest gaze.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FROM TOMB TO PRISON.

The effect upon St. Felix was startling, although he was previously so confident that his horror was Jocelyne's. As Jocelyne's lid slowly fluttered open, he made no immediate exclamation either of surprise or satisfaction,

me is strong to ferret it out. I feel perfectly powerless in the hands of some invisible power. I feel I must go down to Westwood." And while Rose St. Felix had been exulting in the verdict of the physicians, and tenderly obeying their directions in removing the dark hue from Jocelyne's face, she little dreamed of the avenger on her track—the silent, swift suspicion that, vague, purposeless though it was, nevertheless pointed to her.

He went down to Westwood, and heard the story of the awfully sudden, pitiful death, over and over again. He heard of the wild grief of the lower, the beautiful devotion and kindness of Miss Ithamar, from the common people of the country, for he did not prefer to venture among the few families he had known, briefly, as Richmond's guest. But he walked to Sunset Hill, now closed and deserted, and so lonely and gloomy among the trees, less trees, under the dim, snow-suggesting sky, and wearing no suggestion of the scenes of revelry and good cheer that had been enacted inside its hospitable walls.

He walked around the dreary, lonely grounds, where not a sound or sight of human life was heard or seen, feeling, with a shiver of the cold-piercing wind, that it was as desolate as though the nearest habitation had been a dozen instead of only a mile away.

He peered curiously through the slats of the shutters on the ground-floor, and the contrast between the richly-furnished rooms within and the cold, cloudy world without was startling. For the man he had failed to find, forgotten that as Richmond had taken it furnished, he of course left it so.

The early winter dusk was falling when he left the deserted grounds—the evening of the day on which Jocelyne had been laid away in Westwood Chapel, and urged by the same restless impulse that astonished him, yet conquered him, he continued his walk toward the house that sheltered his wife, not hoping to see her, not desiring to see her, yet feeling that his nearness to her and the scene of her magnificent imposture would quiet the restless, vague uneasiness he was conscious of.

Already the lights in the upper windows twinkled from the mansion, and as St. Felix walked briskly along he brushed and brushed by the light he found himself at the lower parlor entrance, the one through which he had been requested to retire that day when he had seen his wife.

It was inexpressibly lonely. A wind was rising, that sought through the gaunt tree-tops with weird whistles in its moans. Not a star was to be seen, and the frozen ground was dimly bare and gray. Not a sound of human life met his ear as he stood near the summer-house where Rose had fainted. The walls of the mansion arose darkly grand at the other end of the lawn; far down toward the left he could just discern the outline of the elegant little chapel where they had left Jocelyne in all the majesty and loneliness of death.

He followed the path that led from the summer-house, and when away down it, took another that intersected it, and that brought him to the chapel.

St. Felix had not the first spark of cowardly fear or superstition in his composition, so that he had no unpleasant sensations when he knew that not five yards from him lay Jocelyne Merle in her coffin—that, just inside the stained glass window was the door that led to the marble-floored vault where they had placed her.

He was a man whose conscience had long since calloused; fear had been taken from him, and it was his destiny to go down to his eternal reward unwarmed again by either pulsing of fear, or glimmer of hope. He was spiritually a soul-sold man; he was physically splendidly strong and healthy; he was mentally vigorous and logical; and yet, in the face of all this, he instinctively gave a slight recoiling start and shiver, as, standing alone in the darkening night, with no human presence near him, he heard unmistakably from within the chapel, a long, agonized moan, as of a soul in mortal extremity.

The sound died slowly, faintly away; and St. Felix deliberately kept his post, a gleam in his eyes, his lips compressed.

"By the very heaven above, it is even worse than I feared! That cat Rose has put her own over the way, but she has not done her work well; the girl has been buried alive! My God, what a sound!"

For, a second appalling moan, deeper than before, assailed his horrified ears; yet, even in the startling novelty of his position, his clear brain did not fail him.

"I have already been inside this chapel once, with Richmond, when he was dying, and I saw the splendor of his prospects. I remember that just within this end window is a door, the key of which hangs beside it—the door to the vault where the Ithamars are laid away. There is a living body imprisoned there, with coffin-lid severed upon it, to whom death must soon come, unless I rescue her. Shall I alarm the family, and have her saved, and enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that my lady is flanked and—discovered, as I should whisper to her? Or, shall I perpetrate a romance of my own, and rescue her, and open another gold-mine thereby, and watch Rose, while she little dreams of the hair-sprung sword over her head?"

"If I take this girl from her living tomb, will I do it with her—where else?—in safety and comfort? Sunset Hill! The empty house to which I can carry her, and no one will be the wiser! I'll do it, I can do it, I will! A second surreptitious visit, to put another body in the empty coffin that shall be dressed in Miss Merle's grave-clothes, and my tracks will be covered. I will attempt it!"

These thoughts had passed through St. Felix's mind with the rapidity of lightning. Probably not a second had elapsed before he had taken the mental view of the case, and made the mental decision; and even while he was deciding had cautiously broken a pane of the stained glass, and crept through into the semi-darkness of the audience-room, where a lamp was burning dimly, as he suddenly remembered having heard it always burned.

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Then a horrible fear suddenly seized him—how could he unscrew the large silver-headed nails? His pocket-knife was useless, his fingers equally so; great Heaven, how was he to accomplish his task after all?

A faint rustling noise inside the casket increased his horror; if he could he would have torn the lid off bodily, regardless of consequences, so frantic was he in his genuine human desire to rescue this girl.

For the moment all thought of the ultimate end of this task was lost; he was only a fellow-being, conscious of the awful peril of another. His face gathered great beads of sweat as he threw off his overcoat, and fairly trembled in his vain endeavors to make his fragile knife turn even one relentless screw. Then, in a mockery of hope, it seemed, he began a search for some chance, a scrap of iron—anything, he thought, and almost a laugh came from his lips as he snatched at an old rusty knife-blade, that he found fitted sufficiently well to enable him to hope for success—an old broken knife-blade, Mike, the gardener's boy, had lost years ago, and that had been waiting for its part in this tragedy.

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for the sight of her deathly face, her haunting eyes that for one second stared so wildly at him, pinched, haggard visage, her limp folded hands, the sickeningly sweet odor of tuberose and geranium leaves, dissipated, for the time, almost all power of speech or action.

Then her lids drooped heavily, and her pale lips assumed a still bluer cast, and St. Felix realized that she had fainted, whether from alarm or prostration, he did not know.

Then his momentary inaction was over. He comprehended that whatever was to be done, must be done quickly, and at once he slipped one arm beneath her, and lifted her light, resistant form from her horrible resting-place, and carried her to the door of the vault, the fresh, cool wind blowing on her with resuscitating influence.

From his pocket he took his well-filled brandy flask, and succeeded in forcing some of its contents between her lips; then, when a prolonged shiver quivered over her, St. Felix took his thick warm overcoat and wrapped it closely about her.

By this time his Vesta match had burned out, and he lighted another, its dim flame flickering dully on Jocelyne's piteous, pinched face, as she lay, rigidly, on his arm, while he watched the imperceptible return of life and consciousness.

She will revive, a deadly person, I wonder if I wonder if I can get her across to Sunset Hill unseen? I will have no difficulty in getting in, once there, with the trusty keys of mine, that I can get her there, securely, I will answer for keeping her there, securely. I will get some one to attend to her, and her return to Westwood will depend upon circumstances. If it pays, I will permit her to return, she will; if not, she will stay here.

He had laid his hand over her heart while he was thinking as above; and he heard just distinguish its fluttering, feeble pulsings.

She is not dead! The game is not yet up! She will revive, a deadly person, I wonder if I wonder if I can get her across to Sunset Hill unseen? I will have no difficulty in getting in, once there, with the trusty keys of mine, that I can get her there, securely, I will answer for keeping her there, securely. I will get some one to attend to her, and her return to Westwood will depend upon circumstances. If it pays, I will permit her to return, she will; if not, she will stay here.

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St. Felix hastily secured the outside shutters, bolting them on the inside, then drew the heavy damask curtains; then he lighted two of the many wax candles in the candelabra, leaving one in its place, and taking the other on a tour of discovery, first opening the register for the admission of the heat he hoped to evoke. He looked the door behind him as he went out on a search for fuel.

"She will freeze to death in this terrible barn, and if I find coal and wood, as I imagine Richmond left a stock, I can kindle a fire in the heater below, for in the darkness no one will see the smoke. I dare not hope there is any provision left behind."

There was a small portion of available food in the pantry. St. Felix found a couple of hams, a large jar of potted salmon, several loaves of bread, stale and hard as bullets.

"Stills will not starve until I find means to get my fortress provisioned. I will seek the bread in my brandy, after I've made a fire—if the entire game isn't up by the fatality of no coal, for she'll freeze before I can get any."

But, Richmond had not removed his coal and wood in the desperate anger and suddenness of his departure. He had laid in fuel for the season, and it was with the consciousness that Satan never deserts his own that St. Felix made his fire—a task his white, aristocratic hands had never before condescended to do.

And as he watched the flames leap and glow, he thought, in detail, of his arrangements for the future.

To-night I shall see that Miss Merle is comfortable and secure. To-morrow I will leave her on the pretext of preparing Mr. Ithamar for her return, while in reality I shall go to the city, see the agent of this property, hire it for a quarter, with the privilege of renewal; secure a servant of some trustworthy woman as servant, who shall select suitable clothing for Miss Merle, and who shall be keeper, and send down a supply of housekeeping stores. I shall follow Madame Rose's inspiration, and not only submit my fair hair and beard to a dyeing process, but also my blonde complexion, transforming me to an olive-skinned, ebony-haired and mustached gentleman of middle age, whom my own self would hardly know. I will affect glasses on account of weak eyes. I will sign the lease as Mr. Ixion; I will start afresh as a respectable, eccentric, wealthy single gentleman, with a sister whose mental condition demands the retirement Sunset Hill affords—an unfortunate who never sees company. I will be enabled to do all this by raising a hush-money."

The fire was burning brightly, and St. Felix could leave it, himself now thoroughly warmed and comfortable. He went up from the cellar, stopping in the pantry to take some of the bread, and the jar of salmon, a saucer from the well-filled china-closet, and a fork from among the kitchen utensils.

As he went along the corridors he paused to see that each window was secure; and then he left himself into the prisoner's room, now quite warm to see Jocelyne standing beside the couch where he had left her, wild-eyed and panic-stricken, in the full possession of all her reasoning powers.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 372.)

BECH FARM, MAY 18—

"My dear son:—

"No, I'll not come. If you had chosen a wife from the capable, working country girls you know, I would be proud to come. But I never took much to fine city misses, and I don't care to claim one of them as my daughter. I didn't invite you to bring her here when we were married, because I knew her finical city ways and my old-fashioned ones, wouldn't get together, and I won't come to you for the same reason. I hope you will enjoy your new home, but I still think you had better have gone to boarding—'you'd be found it cheaper, for the help you'll have to hire to wait on her will cost you all your profits. However you've picked your own row, you'll just have to live it. Only don't look for any help from me. Your mother."

HARRIET MARKHAM

"Never mind it, Annie; she'll know you better some day," said Harry, as Annie looked up, just ready to cry.

"Yes, and I'll make her like me yet," answered the little wife. "Meantime, Harry, your supper is getting cold."

"Well, I'm ready," and they sat down to the supper, everything quite happy, in spite of Mother Markham's displeasure.

Poor old Mother Markham! At that very minute, in the old farm-house a hundred miles away, she was wiping from her eyes tears of real disappointment that the daughter she had always longed for was not what she had hoped she would be—a good, capable country girl, who would be a good help, and not helpless, when she came to visit the old homestead, where Mother Markham and her remaining son, Tom, had lived since Harry went to the city.

There was a good bit of work to be done on the Markham farm this spring, and as Mother Markham would persist in doing her own housework, it kept her busy to cook for the hands. It tried her, too, so much more than common, that she began to wonder what caused the lassitude which crept over her every evening, and made her so unwilling to get up next morning.

And at last there came a morning when Mother Markham could not get up, and Tom was dispatched for Betty Higgins to come over and do the work.

Betty Higgins was stout, but she was also, as Mother Markham expressed it, "shiftless," and under her rule the tidy household got all upside down. So at the end of a week, Betty was dismissed, and a girl from Brannon's Mills installed. But, she did no better, and so she was kept only another week. This time Mother Markham was up and feebly trying to do her own household duties. She crept round a few days, and then she was down, worse than ever. Tom tried to get another girl, but could not succeed, so in sheer despair he wrote to Harry and told him how matters stood at the farm, and asked him to send a girl out from the city, if he could find one.

In a few days a response came from Harry, saying he did not know of any, but would send the first one he heard of to Beech Farm.

The very day the letter came a plainly-dressed stranger stopped at the gate, and asked Tom if that was the Markham place, and, being told that it was, she said she had heard they were in need of help, and that she was in need of a place, so she came to ask them to try her.

"Well, I guess we are in need of help," confessed Tom, who had been blundering through the work and the nursing himself, for the last two or three days. "You'd better come in and see mother."

Mother Markham was tossing on her bed with an attack of rheumatic pain, when Tom ushered the plain lady in a linen suit into her room.

"Yes, 'pears like we need some one, but I don't know about a perfect stranger," she said, doubtfully.

"I have never brought recommendations, for I have never lived out," answered the girl, quietly and respectfully, "but I used to do the work at home, and, if you will let me try, I think I can please you. That sunshine is right in your face," she added, rising at once and lowering a curtain which had worried the sick woman for an hour.

The little act dropped the scale in her favor. "Well, I'll try you for a week, though you don't look like you was much used to the kitchen."

"

THE FOOTPRINTS.

BY A. W. HELLAW.

Your broad lands boast one bare place
Whereon no seedling ever grows.
Was it accident or grace
Led me hither? From below
With an idle eye, half shut,
Up this path I came and found
This proud imprint of your foot—
Stamp of beauty in the ground!

Maud, I know you keenly and cold
Whom I thought as warm as fire;
Whom now other arms enfold—
Whom now other eyes admire.
Passion broke the perfect spell
Wherein love so lived serene—
Dead at last where wild words fell—
Words that better had not been.

You were proud and I was poor,
Maud, there's a sin to be atoned;
There is wrong at some one's door
Though it ever be unknown.
And the far past's paining way
Of the present seems a part,
There's a footprint in the clay
And another in the heart.

Sixteen and Forty;

OR,

WHO WAS CAUGHT?

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

MAUD ECCLES had been standing, the admired center of an admiring crowd, for nearly fifteen minutes, and worshipping her from afar Clifford Kenneth watched her, with a look in his eyes that told its own story of passionate love.

He was handsome, remarkably so, yet in a refined, elegant style; he was educated, agreeably fascinating in manner—and he was worth a thousand dollars a year—a thousand dollars that was earned by daily toil over the books of a firm of tea-merchants, and not the interest of accumulated or inherited fortune.

And Maud Eccles was the oldest of two children of a millionaire; a young lady whose florist's bill alone amounted to Clifford Kenneth's salary, whose jewels cost more money than he had ever earned in his life. Maud was pretty—very pretty in a plump, girlish, rosy way that dissipation had not yet spoiled; but that time might.

And Clifford Kenneth had dared think of her as his love, his wife.

Of course it was absurdly presumptuous; but then, men have been known to perpetrate equally ridiculous mistakes; and Mr. Kenneth, standing aside from the brilliant crowd and watching the girl he loved, did not realize that the unattainable was before him.

Not that he did not perfectly understand the immense disparity in his present pecuniary condition and Maud's, but love at twenty-five is so apt to be rose-colored and hopeful, and with his admirable position he now occupied, his perfect health, his proud position, Clifford Kenneth did not know why he should not, in reasonable time, rise to wealth the same as hundreds of other men had.

He watched Maud with rising pulse and eager eyes—she was so sweet and fair, and so many times had she given him reason to hope—so many times had he caught her blushing gaze—surely, surely, Maud would be true to her young heart and admit what he felt was true—that she loved him.

He had come to her house, resolved to put his fate to the touch that night; and when the sound of some one's voice singing in the music-room had drawn nearly every one thither, Mr. Kenneth captured Maud and bore her off on his arm in an entirely different direction.

"It's too bad, Mr. Kenneth, because I really wanted to hear Miss Sempronius sing."

Maud half-laughed her pretty little protest as she took his arm and he piloted the way to the conservatory where the lights were burning dimly and the sound of plashing water came softly to their ears.

"But I wanted you to-night, Maud," he said, gently, yet the undertone of passion in his voice startled her. "I want you to listen while I tell you what you must have guessed a long while ago—how I love you, my darling, how I want you for my own! Maud!"

And Maud, with downcast eyes, laid her two dainty hands on his arm in a pretty, pleading way, that a wayward child might have used.

"Oh, please, please don't say so, Mr. Kenneth! It hurts me so to have to tell you—it cannot be as you wish! Indeed, indeed, I am so sorry, and I would be so glad if papa would not insist on my marrying Mr. Henderson. But he is rich, and I have always been accustomed to—"

Somewhat the pretty pathos in her voice was dying out, and a flippant coldness was creeping into it that cut Kenneth to the very soul. So, it was because he was poor, after all! And Maud was to marry old Mr. Henderson—his dainty little Maud, because she could better get along without love and devotion than handsome dresses and jewels and horses and carriages.

Well, that was all there was of it. He was refused, prettily, gracefully, decidedly, and he had to beat a hasty retreat.

And he bore it well—graciously. He had loved this girl—oh, so fondly. She had seemed to him all that was sweetest and truest and fairest—and she had brushed the bloom off herself by so quietly telling him it was money she must marry.

He bore it very well. He bowed his acceptance of her decision, and was about leaving the house, when Maud's little sister, Christie, came dancing up to him—a slender, graceful little fairy of four years, with floating golden curls and dark, thoughtful eyes.

"Mr. Kenneth, you mustn't do home! Don't you remember you promised to dance a waltz with me? An' I've got on my new dress, 'cause I was doin' to dance with a bid, dressed-up man!"

Surely enough, he had told Christie, days and days ago—days ago when he was so hopeful and happy—that she must give him the redowa which she was so proud to have learned. And here the little darling was, looking with aggrieved eyes at him, for not having shown her more attention by himself remembering it.

Kenneth was one of those sweet, patient dispositions who are always just and kind to little ones; so now he stopped on his way, smiling, in spite of his sore pain.

"So I did promise, sure enough, Golden-hair! And how sweet my little partner looks! Come, Christie, they are playing our dance!"

It was a happy five minutes for the child, and when Kenneth stopped and sat down beside her for a second, her eyes were all sparkling as she looked confidentially against his knee.

"I like you, Mr. Kenneth! I'm doin' to love

you sunning. I are dot it in my pocket—Hawwy dived it to me!"

She carefully took from her tiny pocket a huge peanut and broke it in halves. "There; you take half, and I take half, and we'll bofe eat 'em. And it'll be philopena, and whoever says philopena first, after to-night, must div a present to the unwer one! Do you know what I want if I tatch you Mr. Tenneth? A dreat bid tawriage for my doll."

Somehow, the child's prattle sounded impressively restful to him, after that heartless-ness of her sister, and yet the innocent mention of the time when one of them could say "philopena" after to-night, smote him with dull, cold pain. Would he ever see her or her fair, cold-hearted sister again?

Then he kissed little Christie good-night, assuring her he should be on his guard against her, and took the peanut and went away—to a long, dull painful fight against a love he was determined should not conquer him and wreck his life.

With such determination as Clifford Kenneth took to his task, men and women invariably succeed in their efforts. And he was no exception. It took hard fighting, and resolute endurance, and stubbornness not to give up to the pleadings of heart against head; and at length he came out victorious; at last he came to be able truthfully to say that it was best for him that he had had the discipline.

And just at this crisis of his life, when he had not seen Maud Eccles for nearly two years, nor even caught a glimpse of Christie's golden hair, he was sent abroad by his firm on delicate, important business, that took him years from home and associations—so many years that when at length he returned to New York city he was a grave, matured man of forty, handsomer than even in young days, and with a balance at his banker's that would have put to blush the fortune of the man for whom Maud Eccles had so cruelly thrown him aside fifteen years before.

He was thinking of it as he was being driven in his carriage to a reception one evening, shortly after his arrival home, where, as wealthy, handsome and unmarried, he became at once the rage.

He was thinking of Maud Eccles, and wondering how she had fared, as men will think and wonder of women who once were dear to them; never once supposing that almost the first person he would see in Mrs. Castlemain's parlors would be Mrs. Henderson herself.

The contrast was vivid between them. He, in the full flush and glory of healthy, perfect manhood, bearing the marks of culture and traveled ease so becomingly. She—fat to actual obesity, with a great double chin, and red, puffy cheeks, and a general look of misery and worry.

But, it was Maud. The woman he had once loved—and he experienced an actual thrill of delight that he had escaped this mountain of flesh, as he took her big, perspiring hand.

"Is it possible, Mr. Kenneth! Really, I am not surprised you almost fail to recognize me, but I've no difficulty in finding my old friend in you."

Of course he had to say something about being delighted, and then—the very sweetest-faced girl he ever had seen in his life came up to him—a tall, slender girl with thoughtful, yet joyous eyes, that were dark and beaming, with exquisite golden hair brushed off a low, fair brow, a girl who never by any physical possibility could become such a mammoth as the lady beside them.

"I don't believe Mr. Kenneth remembers me, Maud, and I attribute it entirely to the shocking way he once ate philopena with me, and then left me with no chance to redeem it."

He turned eagerly toward her.

"It is Christie, my little pet whom I used to dance with, and kiss when I chose! Shall we begin where we left off, Miss Christie?"

His glad admiration was all over his handsome face.

Christie laughed and flashed.

"So far as the part first of the programme is concerned I've not the least objection. They are playing a redowa now, Mr. Kenneth! Do you remember our last dance together?"

She took his arm as they went off to the music-room.

"Have I forgotten it? Or how you told me you liked me afterward! It is to be hoped you will be as kind in your reward after this redowa is over."

That delicate, shy little flush made her impressively lovely, he thought, and he took her in his arms for the dance with a quickening of his pulse and a thrill of delight he thought never to experience again.

A fortnight later, he found her sauntering through her father's conservatory one evening—she was a most welcome guest to others than fair Christie.

"Come, let's talk, little Golden-hair—I used to call you Golden-hair, you remember?"

She laughed, with her sweet face drooped away from him as one hand rested lightly on his arm.

"You have a most excellent memory, Mr. Kenneth! Suppose I tell you that I remember gravely telling you I wanted a doll—earrings for a philopena present, and actually cried for a week when I found you had gone 'for good' and given me no opportunity to win it?"

He pressed the round arm closely to him as they sauntered on—among the very aisles and dusky shades where he had told Maud he loved her.

"I remember perfectly every word my little girl pet ever said to me! Christie! I want her to say something else to me that I shall remember with thankfulness and joy all my life. Will she tell me she loves me? Darling! Darling! you promised me a present if I caught you—I have caught you in Cupid's meshes—I want yourself, my sweet, my love!"

A silence, while the fountain plashed silver-ly, and the pearly water trickled musically over the rocks; while two hearts were throbbing in fierce tumult of happiness.

And then Christie lifted her sweet face.

"Oh, Mr. Kenneth, it is too blessed to be true! I have always, always loved you, and said you will take me."

He stopped her low words with kisses.

How NICE!—Ten years ago a handsome young man passed through Monticello, Ky., and was noticed by a young girl, sitting at the window of the most aristocratic house of the town. She fell in love with him at first sight. She had wealth, culture and beauty. He was poor, and was then on his way to seek fortune as a cattle-herder in Texas. After many ups and downs, he found himself the owner of a silver mine in New Mexico. The girl bloomed into a rarely beautiful woman. She learned who the unconscious object of her fancy was, and they corresponded throughout the ten years. She never wrote a word of her personal attractions or feelings. A few weeks ago he wrote her proposing marriage, and soon followed his letter to her home, where he saw her for the first time. Recently they were married, and Miss Annie Perry, that was, learned, on reaching Silver City, that her husband, R. B. Metcalf, was the greatest capitalist in New Mexico.

ONLY A FLOWER.

BY ALBERT R. AVERY.

Nothing, no, nothing but leaves;
Only a little earthly flower.
Knowing no partner's sorrow,
Happy but for a single hour.
Only a fairy casket,
Filled with rich perfume,
Caring not that to-morrow
All may be hidden in gloom.

Nothing, no, nothing but leaves,
Only looking my best;
Midst the million of workers,
Only a welcome guest.
Only to bathe in sunshine,
For one short, sweet hour;
Then to die and wither—
Only a faded flower.

Oh, to be nothing but leaves,
Brings never a sigh from me;
While I see toiling workers
From weariness never free.
Rather be nothing but leaves,
Than to gain a king's renown;
If only through work and worry,
I'm to wear a royal crown.

A Girl's Heart;

OR,

DR. TREMAINE'S WOOING.

BY RETT WINWOOD,

AUTHOR OF "THE WRONGED HEIRESS," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

SPINNING THE DEVIL'S YARN.

RACHEL came down-stairs looking so pale and wan, the next morning, that even Mrs. Heathcliff grew solicitous.

"I fear you are not happy with us, my child," she said, speaking quite kindly. "If that is so, you have only to tell my husband. I know he would not detain you here against your wish."

"It is not that," answered Rachel, eagerly; "indeed it is not."

Grace was standing near, and a wicked smile curled her beautiful lips. But she said nothing.

Colonel Heathcliff, too, observed the change in Rachel, and his languid blue eyes grew strangely troubled in their expression as he fixed them upon her face.

"You are losing your roses," he said, gently. "Is it I who am stealing them away from you?"

"Oh, no, no!"

"What then? Is Fairlawn like a cage, that you beat your wings against its bars?"

"No," she answered, softly. "I think I could be very happy here. I do not wish to go away while you need me."

He laughed softly to himself, and said, after a pause:

"Then you will remain here forever; but you must not make yourself ill nursing me, I shall not permit that."

Then, beckoning his wife to approach, he added:

"I am going to send you both out for a walk. Take my word for it, you will come back refreshed."

Mrs. Heathcliff bit her lip, and looked slightly displeased, but she instantly rung for her hat and scarf.

"My husband knows how to be very tyrannical, Miss Clyde," she said, with a forced laugh. "We might as well yield at once."

She moved toward the door, waiting for Rachel to follow. The girl arose with extreme reluctance. She would much rather have remained.

Mrs. Heathcliff was in a very gracious mood. She began talking glibly when they were once in the open air. She selected the most public walks, and seemed determined to extract the full enjoyment from the beautiful morning.

Presently a man turned into the walk from one of the side paths. He came straight toward them. Of course they had met scores of other men already during their brief ramble, but, somehow, this one excited Rachel's curiosity.

Mrs. Heathcliff was walking with her eyes fixed upon the ground. Though the man was coming straight toward them, and walking in a hurried, nervous manner, calculated to excite suspicion, she took no notice of him until they came face to face.

Then she glanced up quickly, and came to a sudden stand still. Her features grew convulsed, and she bit her lip fiercely. Some spasm of pain or fear or anguish seemed to shake her whole body.

"You?" she cried out, sharply.

The exclamation was involuntary—wrong from her in the surprise and confusion of the moment. The man shrugged and smiled.

"Yes, Mrs. Heathcliff," he replied, calmly. "You were not expecting me?"

"No."

She called a little, stepped forward, and laid her hand on his arm.

"Tell me, Edward Dent," she demanded, "what brings you here?"

He hesitated, glancing back at Rachel—a glance in which admiration and curiosity were singularly blended.

"This young lady is a stranger to me, Mrs. Heathcliff. Excuse me if I am not communicative in her presence."

These words were spoken in a suppressed voice. But softly as they were uttered, Rachel caught them distinctly. She looked fixedly at the man a moment, then a shiver shook her frame.

He was a great, loutish, ungainly fellow, with ridiculously long limbs, a thin, dark face, and a pair of small, twinkling, deep-set eyes, that burned under their bushy black brows like globes of fire. Rachel shrunk from him with an instinctive feeling of repugnance.

Mrs. Heathcliff had seen the man's admiring look, as well as the look with which Rachel answered it. She smiled softly to herself, and said:

"Mr. Dent, permit me to present my young friend and protégé, Miss Rachel Clyde."

The man started perceptibly. He gave Mrs. Heathcliff a quick glance, as if to assure himself she was not trifling with him. Then he doffed his hat somewhat awkwardly.

"I'm sure this is a pleasure, miss," stammered he. "It's always pleasant to meet anybody so young and beautiful. Besides, I knew you."

"Hush!" cried Mrs. Heathcliff, sharply.

She stopped quickly between the two. "Rachel," she added, speaking in a tone of suppressed excitement, "I think we have walked far enough. Shall we turn back?"

"I do please, madam."

"I do please," I'm tired and out of sorts. I couldn't go a step further."

She turned, snatching Rachel's hand as she did so, and literally dragging her along the path by which they had come.

Two or three long strides brought the man she had called Edward Dent to her side again. He looked down at her with a disagreeable smile.

"This is not the way old friends should meet or part, Mrs. Heathcliff," and he grinned, sarcastically.

She drew a quick breath, growing quite pale with anger and terror.

"Forgive me," she faltered. "I am not well."

"Humph! Perhaps you are well enough to invite me to Fairlawn."

"To Fairlawn?"

"Yes, I am anxious to quarter myself there for the present. Nay, don't make any apologies. I am quite ready to take up with such accommodations as you have to offer."

He ended with another of those disagreeable smiles. Mrs. Heathcliff shook from head to foot. But, with a strength of will worthy a better cause, she turned, after a brief silence, saying graciously:

"Of course you are very welcome. Pardon me for not having offered the hospitalities of Fairlawn sooner."

Then she fell back a little, signing for him to follow her example. The instant Rachel had passed beyond the reach of their voices she said, between her shut teeth:

"What do you mean by coming here, and forcing yours if upon us?"

"I came," he answered, with a sneer, "because it was my pleasure, and because a certain person in whom we are both interested is lurking somewhere in this neighborhood."

Mrs. Heathcliff started, stared wildly, and cried, with a shiver in her voice:

"Impossible! He is not here?"

"I have every reason to believe that he is. He disappeared suddenly from his old haunts, at least, and we could find no trace of him."

"Would he dare come this way?"

"He would dare anything. Such another reckless devil I never saw. Of course I saw the necessity of following him."

"Of course," she echoed, and then relapsed into silence.

"As to forcing myself upon you," he added, presently, "to whom could I go in this emergency, save to my very dear friend, Mrs. Heathcliff?"

She suddenly clasped her fingers over her temples.

"My husband?" she murmured. "What shall I say to him? How explain your presence in the house?"

"Humph! That is your concern. You can say I am some relative, if you wish. I shall not contradict you."

She hesitated, gave him a quick, half-impertinent glance, and finally said:

"Why will you go to Fairlawn? There are hotels in the neighborhood. You might stop at one of those."

"I would rather not," he answered, shrugging—an odd light coming into his flashing black eyes. "I have a reason for wishing to remain undisturbed upon your roof."

"What reason?"

His glance swept forward, rested upon Rachel's trim, elegant figure an instant, and then he replied:

"Love!"

Mrs. Heathcliff started as if she had been struck. She stared stupidly at him.

"Impossible!"

"It is true," he said, coolly. "I don't wonder you are surprised. It's a case of love at first sight. Such things do happen, even at my time of life. Miss Clyde is pretty as a picture. I'm really quite smitten with her."

He was dead in earnest—there could be no doubt of that. Mrs. Heathcliff looked thoughtful. She clasped and unclasped her hands several times, in a nervous manner. At last she turned to her companion with an expression of unmistakable relief upon her face.

"Good!" she exclaimed. "I believe I'm glad you have taken a fancy to the girl. It will save me a world of trouble, perhaps, for I know you will never dare to play me false. You shall marry her!"

"Shall I?" he laughed. "Perhaps she will not marry me."

"She shall be made to marry you," answered Mrs. Heathcliff, compressing her thin lips sternly.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HEART'S CRY.

MR. EDWARD DENT was installed at Fairlawn as an honored guest. Colonel Heathcliff made no attempt to conceal his surprise at the visit, but he treated him with uniform courtesy and politeness.

"You will find Edward very eccentric," Mrs. Heathcliff had said to her husband, at the outset. "But I know you will be kind to him for my sake."

"Certainly," the colonel made answer.

"You say he is a relative?"

She hesitated, flushed a little, and replied:

"A cousin, on my mother's side."

"I never heard you speak of him."

"No. I used to see him sometimes, when a child. But we had not met for many years. I had almost forgotten him."

Colonel Heathcliff looked thoughtful.

"I hope he has not degenerated in any of all these years," he said, after a pause.

"I don't know. I can only tell you that he is very rich. He seems to have made money rapidly. He may leave it all to Grace if we are kind to him."

"True, my dear. You may rest assured I shall do nothing to blast Grace's hopes in that direction."

And so Mr. Edward Dent, in spite of his innate coarseness and vulgarity, and the suspicious suddenness of his appearance among them, became domiciled in the household.

Perhaps Rachel was the only person who really suffered because of his presence in the house. But his manner toward herself filled her with alarm and uneasiness.

He rarely sought the chamber where Colonel Heathcliff still lay, rapidly recovering from his bruises. But the girl could not stir outside the sacred precincts of that room without encountering him.

He followed her into the garden, if she went there for a breath of fresh air or a little exercise. If she sought the music-room, he was by her side in an instant. In the spacious parlors she could never be free from the annoyance of his presence.

The nature of his attentions could scarcely be mistaken. He was ludicrously devoted and loverlike, considering the shortness of their acquaintance. Rachel was not even civil to him, for she could not conceal the disgust and abhorrence he inspired.

The girl would have been very unhappy but for the pleasure she experienced in Colonel Heathcliff's society and attending upon his wants.

Dr. Tremaine came to Fairlawn frequently. But a strange coldness had crept into his manner toward Rachel. He manifested a reluctance to seek her society that cut her to the heart.

One day he came in and found her alone in the drawing-room. With ordinary politeness, he could do no less than linger to say a few words to her. In the midst of their conversation the door was thrust open, and Mr. Dent looked in.

"Ah!" he said, frowning a little, at sight of Dr. Tremaine. "You are engaged, Miss Clyde? I have something particular to say to you."

His manner gave emphasis to his words. He advanced slowly into the apartment. Rachel grew very white, and clung involuntarily to the arm of her companion.

"Take me away," she whispered. "To the garden—anywhere—so that we escape that man!"

Dr. Tremaine's arm slid about her waist. He led her toward the door, looking very stern and resolute.

"Let us pass, if you please," he said, for Mr. Dent had halted directly in their way.

The man hesitated an instant. Something of rage and hatred mingled in the dark villainy of his countenance. But he caught the sudden fire that leaped into Dr. Tremaine's eyes, and wisely drew back.

"Certainly, sir," he said, with an awkward bow. "I did not know you were going out."

"We are."

He knitted his brow, and returned, speaking in a very low voice:

"I must beg an

may help thee in thy search for the ungodly murderer. I now feel anxious that he be seized by violent hands since he lurks along the way I pursue."

Spencer at once acted upon the suggestion of the Quaker, and liberating the stranger, restored his arms and accoutrements to him. He endeavored to make an apology for the treatment he had been instrumental in giving the giant; and the latter accepting all very calmly, quietly replied:

"I am sorry that it has required such desperate evidence to convince you of my entire innocence. I have heard of this Unknown Marksman before I came into this vicinity; but always supposed it was a name applied to the Vigilance Committee of the lumber districts. My name is Goliath Strong, and at present I am serving as guide to three young men who follow the occupation of bee-hunters, and who are encamped near Spirit Rapids. I never did aught of which I am ashamed; but if this Unknown Marksman is not your vigilante, as I supposed he was, then there is some cause for his haunting you people like an avenging Nemesis. There is no human so depraved as to scout the woods and shoot men down for the love of murder. There is something back of all this silent death-work. The Unknown Marksman, you will find yet, is an avenger; at least, this is my opinion."

"Amen," was Gershom Bland's solemn indorsement of the big hunter's words. "This speaks like a Christian and philosopher, friend Strong," said Obed Smiley, with an unctuous acquiescence.

"Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," said Sandy Gray, in a strange tone, intended to be solemn.

Goliath Strong, the giant hunter, was permitted to depart in peace; and soon after the Five Points were deserted by those who had assembled to take part in the races and sports of the day.

Some went in search of the Unknown Destroyer, and some went home. Gershom Bland, Sandy Gray and Running Deer, each departed for his respective settlement with the mail; and Phil Small went forth alone with the terrified members of his household.

Outside all was silent save the ominous creaking of the great sign-board, and the cold, stiff rustling of the pines like the robes of the dead.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 375.)

"BY THE STILL WATERS"

Don't you hear the hickory crackling?
Muffled like, and soft, and low.
Sounds just like a sign of warning,
Only it's a sign of sorrow.
Here's a cinder smoldering, burning,
Drooping ashes, powerful line:
Don't be frightened, little maid,
It's a coffin, but it's mine.

Let me see the balm o' Gilead,
Wavin' by the cabin door.
I won't be like a leaf a-shakin',
In the spring, may child, no mo';
Maybe I won't hear of bluebird
Singin' in de apple trees;
But I'll hear de angels singin',
De'll have sweeter songs than these.

Hark! is dat de thunder rollin'?
See de forked lightning's gleam;
Many a time I've soothed my baby
When de storm disturbed her dream.
Now de drum—I hear it beatin';
Slow and solemn-like for me;
Maybe it's de waves a-broakin',
On de shores of Galilee.

'Twon't be dark, de stars an' shinin';
'Way above de storm and rain;
Dere'll be long protracted meetin's
Campin' on de heavenly plain.
Dere won't be no wailin', weepin';
Dere won't be no day to part;
Christ will hear me when I knock dere,
He will bind de broken heart.

'Cross cold Jordan's troubled waters,
Into Canaan's land I fly;
Dere de tree of life is bloomin',
All de hosts an' passin' by.
Raise me up, hear de rustlin',
Angels at de cabin do';
Don't you weep for poor ole mammy,
She won't never grieve no mo'.

The Cretan Rover; OR, ZULEIKAH, THE BEAUTIFUL.

A Romance of the Crescent and the Cross.
BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM.
AUTHOR OF "WITHOUT A HEART," "THE FLYING YANKEE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIV. A STRANGE SCENE.

"AL SIRAT PASHA, you are my prisoner!"
The Turk started—he was confronted by Julian Delos.

"Your prisoner! Why, you but now came aboard this vessel, a fugitive from me, you sought safety here under the English flag."

"This vessel is mine. I repeat, you are my prisoner; your aide and men can return ashore, and let them report that Al Sirat Pasha has gone on a cruise—a cruise for the port of death."

The Turk at once threw himself upon the defensive, but his scimitar was at once struck from his grasp by Paul Malvern, who at the same time leveled a pistol at his heart.

"You see I am master here. Iron him, Stellos."

Instantly the haughty Al Sirat Pasha, whose command made armies tremble, found himself a manacled prisoner.

"Now, signor, you and your men go back to your boat, you save your lives."

The aide and the soldiers instantly turned to obey, seeing that resistance was useless.

But, suddenly Paul Malvern sprang forward, his face livid, his eyes ablaze, while he cried in tones that thrilled every one:

"No, no; not you, Archer Trevillian—not you! We have well met; into your boat, men, but your officers remain!"

The man addressed as Archer Trevillian turned one gaze upon Paul Malvern, then his face became deathly white, his eyes started, and his form quivered; yet he could utter no word—fear evidently overpowered him.

"Iron him, Stellos! We need him, too, it seems," said Julian, grimly, and the order was at once obeyed.

Then the Turkish soldiers awaited no longer for an order to depart; they sprang into their boat and rowed shoreward in all haste.

"Al Sirat Pasha, you must die; your hour has come," said Julian, sternly.

"Why this indignity? I am a lord of the Ottoman Empire—a pasha of the sultan."

"Were you the sultan himself you should die for the crimes you have committed. Zuleikah, come here—stand so that he can see your face. Pasha, do you know this maiden?"

"I do. She was an inmate of my harem, and destined for the honor of becoming my favorite," haughtily replied the Turk.

"This maiden you tore from her home. Her mother fell by the hands of your soldiers; her brother, a mere boy, was murdered, when unarmed; for this you shall die."

It was the fortune of war that made me the victor. 'Tis the victor belongs the spoils," insolently replied the Turk.

"Kaloolah, come hither. Pasha, do you know this maiden?" and Julian glanced upon the young girl, whose face was pale but stern and determined. At length she stood face to face with the slayer of her father.

"Yes; she, too, was in my harem as her mother was there before her."

"Where is that mother now—she whom you took from a devoted husband, from a baby daughter?"

"At the bottom of the sea! How do I know what becomes of favorites who have lost favor in my sight?"

"And the father—the gallant Cretan, El Estin, where is he?"

"Ask yonder ruin; it may tell the secret."

"No, no, Turk! Here is one to tell the secret."

All started at the strange voice, and suddenly the mysterious, white-clad woman glided before the Moslem chief.

Then her veil was thrown aside, and with a cry of horror upon his lips Al Sirat started back, crying:

"Holy Mahomet! Alfarida! Does the sea give up its dead?"

"Ha, ha, ha, Al Sirat—I am she who was once thy favorite, who ruled you by love's fetters—now, I am the being who has haunted yonder ruin for these long years. You tired of me because the fair Greek, Phoebe, crossed your path—you tired of me, and sent me forth one night on the Bosphorus to die; but he whom you made executioner was merciful—he spared me, and I came hither—came hither with the twin deformities you also sentenced to death, because their hideousness offended your handsome dark eyes—to this isle we came, and in yonder ruin, near my girlhood's home, have we lived—lived as the phantoms of an old crumbling temple."

"Ay, there I lived, and night after night, when the moon shone brightly, did my poor, forsaken husband come thither and commune with his sorrows. Often could I have touched him; but I would not—no, I was a poor, polluted thing—polluted by thy touch."

"But one night he came, and in the very spot where he had met you years before, he met you again—met you, and your golden scimitar drank his life's blood."

"Ah, yes, I know all, for I heard his dying words to his daughter—my daughter. You were his murderer—and now you must die by my hand."

The woman, wild in her frenzy, sprang forward, a jeweled dirk in her uplifted hand. But a slender form glided before her—a gentle yet firm grasp withheld her, and the soft voice of Kaloolah said:

"No—you have sinned enough; do not let a human life be on your soul."

The dirk fell to the deck, and stuck quivering in the boards, while the arms dropped, and the white, haggard, thin, yet still beautiful face turned upon Kaloolah, and the lips parted, while she breathed forth:

"My daughter—will you touch your guilty mother?"

"Mother, I forgive you all, even as my father forgave me."

With a cry of joy, a heart pent up for years in agony bursting forth in delicious delight, Alfarida threw out her arms, and the lone mother and forgiving daughter were clasped in a long embrace.

No word was said for full a minute—no one, not even Al Sirat, dare break the sacredness of this meeting with speech.

At length Kaloolah said, softly:

"My father, what of him, mother?"

"He lies buried yonder—I was jealous of his body, fearful that it would be buried far away, where I dare not go, and I called my slave and we bore it away. Alas! that was a night of horror, for my faithful slave, Sukka, the twin of yonder poor creature, was slain—and we stole him away, too, and gave him burial near your father, for I dare not now call him husband."

Kaloolah gave a deep sigh; the mystery of her father's body being spirited away was solved—her mother had given him burial, and tears had been shed over his lonely grave.

"Al Sirat, do you dare ask for mercy now?" broke in the stern voice of Julian, while he and all seemed relieved, for the mystery of the old ruin was solved—its phantoms were flesh and blood.

"I ask for no mercy. If I must die, so be it. I will die as I have lived, fearless."

The pluck of the man won a murmur of admiration from all who heard him, while Julian continued:

"You are a brave man, though an evil one, pasha. When the moon rises from yonder sea, you shall die."

"So be it—I am ready."

"But not alone; here stands a man equally deserving of death, and he shall bear you company."

It was Paul Malvern who spoke, and he pointed toward the Turkish aide-de-camp, he whom he had called Archer Trevillian.

CHAPTER XXXV.
A LEAF FROM THE PAST.

WHILE the exciting incidents were occurring on the deck of the Silver Scimitar, the vessel was laying to, calmly rocking upon the swell of the sea.

Upon the waters swept a gentle breeze, and the sun, near its setting, cast in deep shadow the shores, and burnished brightly the grand old ruin on the cliff.

On the vessel all were calm outwardly, yet every heart throbbled wildly, even those of the surprised seamen, who gathered in groups, gazing upon the scene.

Presently Paul Malvern said, in deep, earnest tones that proved he was greatly moved:

"I have said that this man, Archer Trevillian, should die also. I will unfold to you all a leaf from the past, and then see if there is one present who will not say that he richly merits death."

"Like myself, he is an American, and like myself he is now an officer in a foreign service. The circumstances which brought this strange coincidence about are widely different."

"In a Southern State I was born and reared—my parents being wealthy and of good family. My sister and myself, she three years my junior, were the only children, and when we were grown to manhood and womanhood, my parents were killed by a railroad accident, and, to my surprise, my father's will, found in his desk, made me heir to all his estates, my sister being simply left to my guardianship, and in case of my death to inherit my wealth."

"It was a strange will, and created much talk among the friends of our family; but it stood good, and I got the wealth, at the same time declaring my intention to share it equally with my sister."

"As I was absent at college until my nineteenth year, and then, on the breaking out of the civil war, went into the Confederate army, my father had as his secretary a young man who had been educated to the profession of the law; that man stands before you in Archer Trevillian."

After the death of my parents, I still kept this man as manager of the estates, for he knew what I was worth far better than I did.

"At the close of the war I returned to my home, which had escaped destruction, and then I met a young lady in whom I became deeply interested—any, I learned to love, and a beloved that she loved me, until one evening I discovered that she was secretly engaged to a young man, one whom I had never liked."

"This was an unfortunate discovery for me, at that time, as he, behaving before told me he was not interested in the lady, running to the contrary notwithstanding, I accused him of deception in the matter, and the result was a challenge from him to meet him in the duello, which challenge I accepted."

"At that time we were rehearsing for some private theatricals, gotten up by the ladies of the neighborhood, in behalf of the wounded Confederate soldiers, and they were to come off the very night following my acceptance of the challenge, and it was agreed that we would keep the matter quiet, as both my antagonist and myself were important actors in the play—nay, stranger still, we were the principals in a dueling scene that was in the piece—certainly a strange coincidence."

"No haste on the play was well put on the stage, and the dueling scene came, and with bitterness in our hearts we took our stands—for we felt that the morrow would usher in a real, not a sham duel between us."

"The word was given to fire, and our pistols flashed together, and, as was his place to do in the play, my antagonist fell to the floor, his part being to be mortally wounded."

"Then we all waited for him to raise himself on his arm, as the character called for, and address some dying words to me."

"We waited long and he never moved, and at length one of the acting seconds stepped forward to prompt him, thinking he had forgotten his lines."

"With horror he started back; my enemy was dead—shot through the head by a ball from my pistol."

"I will pass over the scene that followed: it begins description."

"I was arrested; the truth of the intended duel came out, and it was believed that I had purposely loaded my pistol, to save my own life on the morrow."

"I was in a felon's cell for months, and then was brought to trial—a long, tedious trial, which resulted in my being found guilty of murder with intent to kill, and my sentence was death by hanging."

"The night before the day on which I was to be executed a visitor came to my cell. It was my sister, and she came to save me, for she had bribed the jailer to let me escape."

"The jailer was a young man, unmarried, and one to whom I had rendered favors, and it was decided that we should fly together."

"Conscious of my own innocence, I fled from the ignominious death that threatened me—fled to a foreign land."

"Shortly after my departure Archer Trevillian, who still managed my property, made a discovery—in a secret drawer of my father's desk was found another will; this will was written after the one I had found, and divided the property equally between myself and sister, and in case of my death my share was to revert to her, and vice versa as regarded her half if she died."

"Then it was shown that I had forged the first will, for in my handwriting, several half-completed copies of the will in my favor were found among my private papers."

"A year after my flight Archer Trevillian married my sister, and became the lord of my home and estates, and from that day the remittances sent me abroad ceased; but I had sufficient to allow me to travel about, and, fond of Eastern lands, I passed much time in Greece, Turkey and Asia."

"One night, in Athens, I was set upon by an assassin, and he came near taking my life, for he gave me a deep wound in the side. In that assassin I beheld a man strangely like Archer Trevillian; yet I did not suspect him, for what could he be doing in Greece?"

"After a long illness I recovered, and drifted into Turkey once more; but my letters home were unanswered, and I gradually went down hill until I was almost starved. Nay, one night, driven to desperation by my ill-fortune, I would have taken my own life, had I not been called from the dark deed by hearing a combat with muskets, and I was not far from me."

"Then I first met Dolos Bey, and he it was who has saved me from myself. What I am today I owe to him."

"But, enough of self. Let me now tell you of the career of this man," and Paul Malvern pointed contemptuously toward Archer Trevillian, who stood with bowed head and white face, his manacled hands clasped, his whole attitude that of one who held no hope in life.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 370.)

Base-Ball.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

THE CHAMPIONSHIP CAMPAIGN.

THE Western tour of the Eastern nines—as far as League club games go—ended May 26th, and the result for the first time in the history of the League is in favor of the East, the Boston club having won six out of their eight games with League nines, and the Hartford four out of their seven. If they can do so well on their adversaries' own ground it is reasonable to suppose that they will do better when the Western nines visit the East, and consequently a busy and exciting campaign may be expected this coming June, when the League nines make their first Eastern tour of the season.

The League club games played out W. st. the past week were as follows:

May 21, Boston vs. Louisville, at Louisville	5	0
" 22, Boston vs. Louisville, at Louisville	3	2
" 23, Hartford vs. Cincinnati, at Cincinnati	5	4
" 24, St. Louis vs. Chicago, at Chicago	6	5
" 25, Chicago vs. Cincinnati, at Cincinnati	12	12

CLUBS.	Games won.	Games lost.
Boston	6	2
Chicago	1	1
Hartford	4	4
Louisville	1	1
St. Louis	1	1
Cincinnati	1	1
Games lost.	2	5

The relative position of the nines is as follows:

CLUBS.	GAMES WON.	GAMES LOST.
Boston	6	2
St. Louis	5	3
Hartford	4	4
Chicago	3	5
Louisville	2	4
Cincinnati	1	1
Games lost.	23	23

No one supposed that the Chicago club would occupy fourth position in the race this season, nor would the club have done so but for the lively ball experiment.

In the international arena the past week but few championship games have been played, the best being as follows:

May 21, Allegheny vs. Rochester, at Rochester	10	2
" 22, Allegheny vs. Live Oak, at Allegheny	9	2

The full record to date is as follows:

CLUBS.	GAMES WON.	GAMES LOST.
Allegheny	1	1
Buckeye	0	1
Live Oak	0	0
Manhattan	1	0
Maple Leaf	1	0
Rochester	1	0
Tecumseh	0	1
Games lost.	2	2

The relative position of the nines is as follows:

CLUBS.	GAMES WON.	GAMES LOST.
Allegheny	2	2
Manhattan	1	0
Buckeye	0	1
Tecumseh	1	1
Maple Leaf	1	0
Live Oak	0	0
Total.	14	14

Last week's play was marked by several extraordinary games, the most remarkable being the 5 to 4 game at Erie in which sixteen innings were played. The Hartford club also had a twelve-innings game with the Buckeyes marked by a score of 2 to 6 only.

NOTES OF THE DAY.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, in reply to a correspondent, says:

"The oldest club in the country is the Olympic, of Philadelphia, organized in 1833. The Knickerbocker, of New York, were organized in 1844."

This is an error. The Olympic club played town-ball—not base-ball—up to 1860. The Knickerbocker is the oldest base-ball club now in existence. This is its thirty-second year of play, and they have not missed a season.

The Hartford Times calls the Hartford club the "Brooklyns," there being a Hartford club now in that city. Besides which \$5,000 has been subscribed to raise a professional team there.

The Cincinnati Enquirer of May 21st says:

"The base-ball players were surprised at the Ludlow Grounds yesterday afternoon. They had gone there for the purpose of having a quiet little game, and were willing that spectators should be admitted for twenty-five cents per head. The game had hardly commenced when Sheriff Lowe, of Covington, made his appearance with a posse of men, and arrested P. P. Short, manager of the Ludlow Grounds, and the gate-keeper. The arrest was made under a provision of the General Statutes, which forbids persons to violate the Sabbath. The arrested parties gave bail, and will have a hearing before Judge Kennedy in Covington on Wednesday."

This is a good work. It is to be hoped that the Sunday ball-playing will be stopped elsewhere. Here in New York it is against the law to play ball Sunday, and the police are ordered to arrest all found engaged in the objectionable work. The blasphemous and dirty language which mark Sunday sporting crowds are notorious.

Some fine play was shown by the Cincinnati in their games with the Boston. A dispatch to St. Louis says, in the 6 to 2 game, that:

"Bond was almost invincible, while the visitors hit Mathews rather freely, but not collectively, except the last inning. The fielding of the home club was something remarkable, and in spite of defeat, they met with a regular ovation from the crowd. In the third inning the Boston had three men on bases and none out, when Leonard's line hit to left was held by Cuthbert. He threw home to Hicks to cut off the man at third, who touched second without first touching the base. Hicks threw to Hallinan, who touched his base, and threw home in time to once more cut off Wright, who was trying to tally. He was run out between bases by Foley and Jones. The umpire decided it only a double play, thinking Wright had touched his base after Cuthbert's catch. Wright himself acknowledged he did not. However, the run was made. In the fourth inning the Boston had two men on bases and one out, and no runs made. In two double plays by Jones and Hicks on sharp foul tips retired the side."

This is pretty work.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, in recently commenting on the League club nines, says:

"Ferguson also has an excellent team, and will press the Boston and St. Louis very hard; his new pitcher, Larkin, has much of the celerity and effectiveness of Nichols, and, if anything, an improvement over Bond. The season will, from all appearances, be as wonderfully exciting one. With four clubs evenly matched, it is up to prove a knock-and-need race for the pennant, and it is not likely that a decision can be made until the close."

The order of fielding skill exhibited by the League nines in their recent contests together shows Hartford in the van with but 28, St. Louis second with a total of 31, Boston being third with 38, Louisville fourth with 42, Chicago fifth with 51, and Cincinnati last with 62. In base-hit batting Louisville leads, Cincinnati being second, Boston third, and St. Louis last.

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A JUNE POEM.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

With roses in her hair sweet June,
With tender step and gaily,
Comes lightly wandering ways,
And men perceive profanely.
The green has grown into the red,
The flowers are brightly blowing,
The sweetest flowers of all the train—
The cabbages, are growing.

Bright month of June, how dear it is!
The year is half-way through now—
The sweetest time of all the year,
And several bills are due now!
Soft verdure clothes the fields and hills
In emerald hues and mellow;
Far, far the loquacious green—
And butter's growing yellow.

The murmur of enchanting streams
So slumberous and inviting,
To-day allures the wandering steps—
And fish are mar, and biting.
The sun ascends its highest light,
And days are getting longer;
A mildness spreads o'er all the earth—
Onions are getting stronger.

The sweet fruit ripens on the bough,
In sunshine warm and glowing,
Nature provides for every need—
My parsnip bed needs hoeing.
The earth one pleasant pasture seems
And smiles both warm and sunny,
And all the leaves are fully out,
As, likewise, is my money.

The wild vine climbs the favoring tree,
And blossoms in the morning,
The odor of soft winds is borne—
Soap factories are running.
The sweet music of the happy time!
Unfolds its glorious show now,
And on it falls the sun's bright beams—
Straw hats are all the go now.

A gentle shower, and nature wears
A freshness most surprising,
See, everything comes springing up
And day-board, too, is rising.
The heart with joyful moods is filled,
And brightness of creation,
And one feels almost glad enough
To own a poor relation.

Schamyl, THE CAPTIVE PRINCE; OR, The Cossack Envoy.

BY LAUNCE POYNTZ,
AUTHOR OF "LANCER AND LASSO," "THE SWORD-
HUNTERS," "CAVALRY CUSTER," ETC.

I.—ZISKA.

BRIGHT morning in St. Petersburg. Sky as blue as ever it was in Italy, the air still, thermometer 20° below zero, ground and buildings covered with a white sheet of snow. The broad avenue of the Newsky Perspective is crowded with sledges, all the bells ringing a mad peal of merriment. Still the sleeper sleeps on.

He arrived at the Hotel de Russie last night and registered his name as "Ziska Hoffman, Journalist, America."

With him came a big Russian friend, met on the steamer, and it is Ivan Ivanoff who is now shouting at the door.

"Come, Batushka, (little father,) if we want to see the Petroskoi before we take the train to Moscow now is our time."

And he thumped at the door, effectually dispelling further sleep.

Ziska hurriedly dressed himself and admitted the good-natured giant.

"Now, Batushka," said Ivanoff, as he came in, "if you are a wise man you'll not take the train to-day but go out and see the sights. There is the imperial palace and the hermitage of her most blessed majesty, of glorious memory, Katinika the Great, there is the admiralty and the Petroskoi, the great statue of our immortal czar Peter. There are the theaters, the arsenals, the churches. Surely you would never miss them. Batushka, stay a few days and we will go together."

"Well," said Ziska, smiling, "I don't know that we are in such a furious hurry, after all, and I think we might easily do worse than explore this city in company, Ivanoff. Where shall we go first?"

"To breakfast, Batushka," said Ivanoff, grinning all over his broad face. "A regular Russian breakfast is ready below, and after that we will take a sledge and enjoy ourselves. Ah, Batushka, you don't know what a change it is for me, who left Russia a poor peasant, to come back a rich merchant, able to enjoy myself and have such a friend as the American nobleman."

Ziska laughed. Ivanoff was a true Russian, full of extravagant compliments.

They went down to breakfast, and a strange way they have of eating in Russia. First Ivanoff led his friend to a sideboard.

"Now, Batushka, you must eat Russian style."

There were little saucers of sweetmeats, others of salt anchovies and caviare and little glasses of vodka. Possibly you don't know what caviare and vodka are. Caviare is the roe of the sturgeon, or rather sturgeon, a species of fish peculiar to the Volga river. Americans wouldn't like it, first time, or second either, but epicures are very fond of it.

You know Hamlet calls peculiar dainties "Caviare to the general."

Ivanoff made Ziska take first a little jam, then some salt anchovies and caviare, then a little glass of fiery vodka or Russian rye whisky.

"There, Batushka, that will give you an appetite."

The breakfast was in Russian style, with plenty of hot fat soups and stews, everything seeming to be intended to keep up the animal heat of the body.

"Now, Batushka, the sledge is at the door. Leave me to make the bargain with the blacksmith. He will take the skin from you, the little dove, the son of an animal."

A few moments later the two friends were out in the biting frosty air, and Ziska shuddered through his big ulster as he felt the intense cold.

Before the door stood a long low sledge with the runners made of thick wood and turning up at both ends away from the body of the vehicle, a very different machine from the trim American cutter of Ziska's recollection. In front were three horses, the center one a powerful black, the outside horses small, wild-looking shaggy ponies.

But what a strange rig! The middle horse was in shafts, and over his collar rose a bright steel bow about two feet high, carrying three large deep-toned bells, chiming in accord with each other. The head of the horse was checked up to this bows so that he could only look straight before him. The outside animals had hardly any harness but a surcingle and traces; they wore no blinkers and seemed to be perfectly free.

"Now, Batushka, jump in. Plenty of furs. Cover up warm or you may lose a hand. Now, Peter Petrovitch, poshol!"

Poshol means go on, and was one of the few Russian words Ziska had picked up before leaving St. Petersburg.

The vocabulary is handy if you ever go to Russia. It is all sufficient for the *ishvoshishik* or drosky-driver.

Poshol! Go ahead!
Stop! Stop!
Na pravo! To the right!
Na levo! To the left!

That's all you need till you come to settle your fare, and then you want to know the numerals up to ten, so as to count coppers and rubles. All that Ivanoff saved Ziska—but he told him about the Russian money, which is very simple, as they drove along.

"You see, Batushka, you Americans have your dollars, we have our rubles. Our ruble is only worth seventy-five cents, but it counts a hun-

drod coppers. Ah yes, in the old days we had silver rubles, but now it is all paper everywhere, just like your greenbacks, and the good Lord he knows when we shall get back our old hard money."

As he spoke they were gliding over the snow down one of the broadest and handsomest streets in Europe, the renowned Newsky Prospect. In Russia broad streets are all called "prospects" like our "avenues," side streets are "outlays."

The Newsky Prospect is lined with grand houses and palaces, and runs right through the center of St. Petersburg, from the Alexandrinski parade-ground to the Admiralty and Winter Palace, about three miles. It is the Russian Broadway, and stretches across the wide bend of the river Neva, which winds all round the city.

To-day it is full of sledges and people all in furs, and Ziska lies back muffled up to the chin in white wolf-skins and watches the brilliant panorama with delight.

"Hullo, Ivanoff, what's that?" he asks, as a glitter of weapons ahead of him catches his eye. There are a forest of spear-points high over the confusion of sledges and the dull booming of kettle-drums is audible.

"The Cossacks of the Guard, Batushka," said his friend, proudly. "Ah, they have no such soldiers in America as those. Look at them how they ride!"

As he spoke a wild-looking man in a black fur cap and huge gray overcoat galloped by the sledge waving a short whip, and motioning to clear the way, with shouts of "Poshol von! Poshol von!" (Out of the road.) Slung at his side was his long spear, resting in the stirrup-leather, and he bore a carbine and big revolver, besides a sword in his belt. He wore no spurs, but carried his whip, and alternately used it on his shaggy little horse and the heads of any of the crowd who did not obey quickly.

Behind him, at about fifty paces, came the dark column of Cossacks, all in the same dress, all with the same short stirrups and little horses, but led by one of the handsomest men Ziska had ever seen.

This officer rode a great black horse, very different from those of the Cossacks. Obviously it was of English or other blood, and its rider was very different from the squat, thickest Cossacks, with their pug-noses and big bristling beards. He was tall and slender, with a high-bred face, great dark eyes, and a long black mustache that nearly touched his breast as he rode. His oval aquiline face was dark and pale, with a thoughtful, melancholy expression. He was obviously an officer of rank, but his uniform differed from that of the Cossacks. It was all of black or green, so dark as to be nearly black, with a high conical Persian cap, long frock coat to the ankles, polished riding-boots, fur pelisse and gauntlets, very long silver-mounted pistols and saber—such was the appearance of the young officer who rode, solitary and proud, at the head of the Cossack column.

"Who is he, I wonder?" mused Ziska. "That man looks as if he had a history."

"That, Batushka!" said Ivanoff, eagerly. "That is young Schamyl!"

"Who?"

"Young Schamyl, the son of the great Tcherkess chief who gave Czar Nicholas so much trouble. When the old man surrendered at last, the czar treated him well and allowed him to go abroad on parole. He died at Medina only a few years ago. Well, Batushka, our czar is wise. He keeps the son of Schamyl here in the capital as an officer of his own staff, and he is a prince among princes. He ought to be happy."

"He does not look so," thought Ziska. "At that moment the young Circassian prince passed close to the sledge, and as he passed he looked at the American."

Involuntarily Ziska Hoffman raised his hand and saluted young Schamyl. The prince looked surprised, but returned the salute with a grave dignity of demeanor that impressed the American very favorably, to all appearance.

As he passed on, Ziska observed to Ivanoff: "You may think that man is happy, but to my mind he looks like a prisoner planning to escape. Your czar may be wise, but he'd better watch his hostages."

The Russian merchant laughed.

"We can trust the czar, Batushka. Look; they have passed, and here we are at the admiralty. Peter Petrovitch has good horses. That fellow in the middle is a true Orloff trotter. See him step out."

Indeed Ziska was surprised at the way in which the sledge was whirled through the street, the big horse in the middle throwing out his feet in a long slashing trot that would not have disgraced Dexter, while the shaggy Ukraine ponies on the outside were at full gallop. It was a singular but quite prepossessing team, and essentially Russian.

At a signal from Ivanoff the sledge stopped near the Admiralty, a great gray granite building; and the travelers had a full view of the celebrated equestrian statue of Peter the Great, the horse rearing at the edge of a precipice formed by a huge block of granite thirty feet high. Before them was the frozen sheet of the Neva, and at the other side of the Admiralty rose the enormous pile of the Winter Palace, leading to the so-called "Hermitage" of Catherine II, the cottage that cost twenty millions of dollars.

Ziska was still looking round him, lost in wonder and admiration, when he felt a hand on his shoulder. He started. A Cossack on horseback was by the sledge and handed him a little white note. Before he could open it the man saluted and rode away, leaving Ziska puzzled beyond measure.

(To be continued.)

Captain Saul's Victory.

BY C. D. CLARK.

"He broke the token, and half he gave to me, While the other's rolling—while the other's rolling—"

At the bottom of the sea!—OLD SONG.

So sung Nettie Dare, sitting on the gray rocks beside the sea, and watching the long swell as it came in from the east. It was the best of New Bedford, off New Bedford, and the maiden who sang that old, old song of love and constancy was beautiful: young and fresh, with abundant hair, lustrous black eyes, and lips which seemed to ask for kisses. So thought the young sailor, Ned Valton, as he leaped down from the rocks and stood beside her.

"Will you take a token from me, Nettie?" he said, tenderly. "I, too, am going away across the sea."

"Ned!" she cried, "where did you come from?"

"I just dropped in," replied the gray young sailor, passing his arm about her waist. "I've only a little while to stay, my darling, but I will be long enough to tell you that I love you better than any creature on the earth. I'm going out as mate, this trip, and I hope, when I come home, that the owners will think I have done well enough to make me captain. And if they do, your father will give you to me, for the captain of a whaler is a great man in New Bedford."

"But three years is a long, long time, Ned," said the sailor, "I'd sooner see you follow any other vocation than the sea."

"It's the best I can do, dear girl. I've been a sailor since I was big enough to lift a marlin-spike, and I shall be a sailor till I die."

He took a small gold ring from his finger and cut it in two pieces with his knife, and gave her one.

"Keep it, Nettie," he said, "and in the day when you get it back you may know that the hand that held the token is cold in the dust or under the sea. Then you may bid good-by forever to your sailor lover, and look for another. I don't want to hamper you, my girl. If, when I am gone, you find another you care for more than poor Ned Valton—"

"Ned!"

"I won't say what I was going to say, then, and indeed I never doubted you. But I must say good-by, for the Dolphin has set the signal to recall the boats, and it won't be long before the anchor is off the bottom. One kiss, my darling, and then a long good-by."

He clasped her hand, and their lips met in a long and tender kiss. At this moment they heard a hissing laugh, and starting quickly, Ned Valton saw a man in a seaman's garb standing upon the rocks above, and looking down at them.

"He don't like to interfere, Ned, old boy," said the man, "but we must make the best of this wind. Go down to the 'Ship' and find the second mate, and go to the boat. I'll stroll along the shore, and get there as soon as you."

It was Captain Saul Wilson of the ship Dolphin, a successful captain, one who never went upon the whaling grounds but that he filled up before the rest of the fleet—a man who never lost a ship, and who made money for his owners; who could command almost any "lay" when he wished to change sea.

"I'll go, captain," said the young man. "Nettie and I have made a bargain, and if I come back after doing good work, and the owners give me command of the new ship they are going to build, she is to be my wife. Kiss me, again, Nettie; Saul knows that we love each other."

Again he pressed her to his heart, and then tore himself away.

"Take her home, Captain Saul," he said; "I can't stay."

He sprang over the rocks and disappeared, and Captain Saul gave Nettie his arm. She took it, and as she walked along the shell-strewn beach she looked up again and again into the weatherbeaten face of Saul Wilson.

But that of a man who had suffered in secret. His eyes, even now, had a dreamy look, and he kept them steadily turned away from her.

For he loved her.

Little did Nettie Dare know that this man had given her all the wealth of a great heart and had been hesitating until Ned Valton, younger, more ardent and handsome than himself, had taken his place, and he saw the great hope of his life slip away from him, leaving him, as he had seen wrecks of ships, stranded and forsaken, on a desolate shore.

He dared not look at her, for he loved Ned Valton, and he feared for himself. Once or twice the thought came to him: "If he should die; if anything should happen to him on the voyage!" But he drove the thought out of his heart, and when they came near the cottage of old Captain Dare he bade her good-by as an elder brother might have done, and hurried down to the boat, which lay there in waiting, with only three men in it. Saul Ned and the mate, and the third mate, the latter took an oar, and the boat shot away toward the ship. Two hours later the anchor was hove, the head-sails filled, and the Dolphin bore away on her distant voyage.

Months had passed, and again we see the Dolphin. She is on the sperm-whale fishing grounds, and a look at her is enough to show that she has seen service. There is an oily look about her, and the men have a more appearance. The odor of oil is everywhere, and even the rigging is busy.

On either side of the ship a strange object is suspended, the head of a gigantic sperm-whale, and the men are working in the great cells scooping out the rich sperm from the depths.

"I'd like to see these heads as soon as we can," said Ned Valton. "I don't like the look of the sky."

Saul Wilson cast a gloomy look to leeward, and saw that a storm was brewing.

"Let it come," he said, in a surly tone. "I think sometimes it'd be better for me if the next storm sent the Dolphin to the bottom. Curse it, why do you stand staring at me! I'd have you know that you've got a man to deal with, Ned Valton."

"I'd like to talk to you," said Ned, sadly. "Well, well; this voyage must come to an end, some time."

"Do you want me to send you forward among the men?" cried the captain, fiercely. "By heaven, I'll do it if you don't look out. I won't stand a sea-sick man, you know."

Ned went forward without a word. He did not understand all this. From the moment the ship had rounded the Horn Saul Wilson had begun to show his hatred of the man who had been his friend, and he could do so right, and the captain repeatedly interfered with him in the line of his duties, where no captain who has any respect for his first mate will interfere. The men muttered among themselves that they had heard the captain say that he would "work up" Ned, and ride him down like the main tack, and all old sailors know what such a threat as that means on board ship.

"I wish you would speak to the captain, Benton," said Ned, as he passed the second mate in the wardroom.

"I don't want to do what has come over you lately. I try to do my duty like a man, but, do the best I can, it is impossible to satisfy him. He has made the ship a hell to me, and I can't stand it much longer."

"What have you done to him?"

"Nothing whatever. He has acted in this way for nearly a year. All I can say is, when we get to Honolulu, I leave the ship. But there is a storm brewing, and if it strikes us before the heads are gone, I wouldn't give a penny for our lives."

At this moment the captain, who had been glaring at them from the quarter-deck, cried out to the first mate:

"I'll make a mince of you if you don't move, you Ned Valton!" he cried. "Start those men lively; I'll ride you down, curse you!"

Ned made no reply, but went to the rail and spoke to the men in a low voice. They loved him, and there was not a man among them who would not have worked his fingers to the bone for the young mate. They sprang to their work with a will, and the work was nearly done when even the captain saw that they could wait no longer.

"Stand by to cut away!" he cried. "The gale will catch us if we don't look out. Lively there with your axes!"

The men saw that the storm was rolling up with frightful rapidity, and the blows of the axes fell fast. A moment more and the two great heads went plunging down into the sea, and the men sprang out to set the storm-jib and staysails. Scarcely had it been done, and the sails drawn up to a tight leech, when the gale struck her, and the Dolphin went over on her beam-ends as if smitten down by the hand of a giant. The men at the wheel let her go over, and she rolled righted and went off before the wind with frightful speed. All was enveloped in utter darkness now, and Benton, who had missed Ned Valton from his side, called to him; but he was gone!

"My God, captain!" cried the second mate. "Ned is overboard!"

Saul Wilson uttered a terrible cry, and glared at the water with wildly-dilated eyes.

"I killed him!" he cried. "I am a murderer, do you hear? I killed him as surely as if I had brained him with an axe! Curse the darkness; but for that, I'd save him yet!"

He sprang to the rail and looked out, and raising his powerful voice, sent it ringing out across the sea. A feeble shout, from astern, told that there was a man there.

"Throw her up into the wind!" screamed the captain. "Up with her, if it takes every stick out of her! Now then, who is with me to save that poor fellow?"

Four men quickly manned a boat, and the captain sprang into the stern-sheets. The crew worked at the falls, and scarcely had the boat touched the water when the oars dropped together, and the boat shot away from the ship into the black night beyond. Again the captain hailed, and the feeble voice replied, far ahead.

"Pull, my men, pull! A hundred dollars to every man in the boat if we save him. Lift

her, my boys; start every plank and stretcher, but pull. Brace up, Ned; we are coming!"

As he spoke a red light flashed from the bow of the ship, and a blood-red glare fell upon the sea. Benton was burning red fire to show them where the young mate was. Then they saw him, rising upon the crest of a mighty wave and again sinking from sight, but struggling manfully to keep afloat. Then from the ship rose a resounding shout, and the drowning man took heart and struggled manfully. But, weighed down by his heavy clothing, he was nearly spent, and all at once they saw him scroop up his hands, and with the name of the girl he loved upon his lips, go down in the dark water. Then, in the glare of the red fire, they saw the captain rise in the stern-sheets and plunge head foremost into the water. A moment of wild suspense, and then the head of Saul Wilson appeared above the waves, and a wild shout went up as they saw that he bore upon one arm the form of the young mate. A moment more and they were in the boat and pulling toward the ship.

So it was that when Ned lay in his bunk, the captain came and told him how he had loved Nettie for five years, and how his passion drove him nearly mad. But his good angel triumphed, and three years after, when Ned Valton and Nettie were married, Saul Wilson said amen to the prayer for their happiness with a fervent heart. He never married, but all through life they had no better friend than the captain of the Dolphin.

"Vengeance is Mine."

BY JOS. E. BADGER, JR.

"EASE UP there, stranger! Keep your hand's off 'm thar 'ar pop-guns, less ye want to go to thunder by 'xpress!"

Trotting leisurely along the level bottom road, thinking only of reaching his destination for the night, John Fielding abruptly drew rein as a man stepped into the road from behind a dense clump of wild roses. This alone would have been startling, when the unenviable reputation of that portion of Missouri is considered, but when the rough-clad, brutal-looking stranger

glared at him with a cold, revolver, uttering the threat recorded above, it may well be pardoned the traveler if a cold thrill of something not far akin to fear, crept up and down his spinal column.

"You ain't a-gein' to be hurt, of you take things easy, boss—leastwise by me," added the footpad, with a chuckle of complacency. "Just so ye don't kick over the traces."

"Who are you and what do you want?"

"Fust, I want to know your name. Mebbe you ain't the man I'm lookin' fer, after all."

"My name is John Fielding."

"Take him, boys—lively!"

At the words two men sprang from the dense undergrowth along the narrow road, and almost ere he could realize his peril, the traveler found himself lying upon the ground, a heavy knee pressing into his breast, a pair of brawny hands shutting off his breath with a vigor that caused his brain to reel, and a blood-red mist to star over his eyes.

A second man secured the starry-haired horse, while the third—who had halted the rider, held himself in readiness for prompt action in whatever quarter the necessity might arise. The whole affair, from beginning to end, plainly evidenced that these men were engaged in no unimportant task; the cool and adroit celebrity with which they tore the hunter from the saddle, bound and gagged him without noise or outcry, was very significant.

"You take the horse on ahead, Mart. Tell the boss we've got his man. He'll find us over to Glinski's. Pull that horse now. 'T looks like we was goin' to hev a harricane in good earnest."

The man addressed as Mart sprang into the saddle and thundered away at full speed, soon disappearing among the huge boles of the cottonwood trees.

"Now, stranger," added the fellow, addressing the prisoner, "we mean business, chuck up. I won't swar you'll git out o' this ere mess with a hull skin, fer that's jest as the boss says; but you'll find the trail all the easier of you make up your mind to grin an' baw what ye can't help. You've got to git over 's fur's Glinski's—bet-ter'n two mile—an' that afore sundown. 'Ll you walk?"

"Ef he don't, we'll jest drag him by the heels," growled the other ruffian. "Blamed if I tote the warrant."

"You don't need, Bob—len' a han'—an' the captive was raised to his feet. He's goin' to be sensible an' walk—sence he can't help hisself."

Realizing the utter folly of provoking his captors, John Fielding submitted to the inevitable and obediently followed the winding trail through the thickly-timbered bottom, as indicated by the two footpads.

His mind was busy enough during that enforced tramp. The words of the three men plainly showed that their object in this waylaying him was not for money alone, since they had made no effort to search him, beyond removing his arms. His active memory could recall the name of but one person who had ever borne him enmity bitter enough to use such stern measures to insure his revenge; but one—and word had come, long since, that he was dead. The source of the news seemed trustworthy. There could not well be an error; and yet—

"You slip ahead, Bob, and see ef thar's anybody thar with Ellen. Ef Tom Cowden is meakin' round, we've got to bluff him off. He's so blamed sweet on the gal, and she's durned contrary, it'd be jest our luck of she was to set him on to makin' a mess."

"I most wish she would—"

"An' you'd hev the hull kentry climbin' up our backs w'd fer ha'r. Twont do, Bob; Tom's too well-known for that. Go—make her look out."

Ten minutes later the squat, black-browed ruffian returned, announcing that the coast was clear.

"We ain't none too soon, nuther," said the other, with a sweeping glance at the threatening sky. "If we don't ketch go-long afore another hour, then I can't read the signs."

"It'd be a joke on us ef that little saplin' d take a notion to lay down to git out o' the wind," added Bob, with a laugh, as they entered a desolate-looking clearing in which stood a small, square log-cabin.

The "sapling" alluded to was an enormous sycamore tree, dead, yet with wide-spreading top, which stood a few rods to the rear of the cabin. Girdled, fire-scarred and decaying at the roots, there was some foundation for the outlaw's speech.

"That's the gal! slide ahead, Bob, an' keep the door. It'd be jest like her to slam it shut in our faces, when she sees how the stranger's rigged out."

There seemed some foundation for this fear, for the girl—a tall, robust, yet fairly handsome young woman—barred their passage, a stern light in her large gray eye.

"Some more of your deviltry, Zenas Black! I'll be mighty sharp-set fer grub, but I'll be mighty sharp-set fer grub. Thar's a good gal—make way, Nell—the storm's comin' like a house afire!"

"Lookin' fer Tom Cowden, an' afeard we'll spile the courtin'," said Bob, with a coarse laugh.

"If you thought there was any chance of his comin' to-night you'd run for the brush, hot-foot, Bob Barker!" sharply retorted the young woman, but making way for the men to enter, a privilege of which they gladly availed themselves, as the dust and twigs began to sweep past on the wings of the bursting storm.

For a few moments they all stood in silence

as the full force of the howling winds assailed the little cabin until it seemed as though it must be leveled to the earth or else raised from its foundation and carried bodily away. Presently there came a lull, and the door was forcibly burst open, two men entering in such haste that they almost fell headlong.

"Help bar the door!" panted the elder man, as the wild winds resisted his efforts. "The devil's in the air to-night!"

"You've been drinking again, father," and Nell looked steadily though sadly into the blood-shot eyes of the weatherbeaten squatter.

"Spose I have—who set you up to preach at me? Keep on your own side o' the root, Nell, and we'll get along all the better. There—set out what you've got to eat. We're hungry."